



Memorandum

THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS' WILL TO PERSIST

State Dept. review completed

ARMY review(s) completed.

DIA and PACOM review(s) completed.

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7 September 1966

**MEMORANDUM FOR: The Honorable W. Averell Harriman
Ambassador at Large
Department of State**

On behalf of the Director, I am sending you a CIA study of elements underlying the Vietnamese Communists' determination to continue the war in South Vietnam. The principal findings of this study, which was prepared in response to a request by Secretary McNamara, appear on Page 19.

/s/

**R. J. SMITH
Deputy Director for Intelligence**

**Attachment:
"The Vietnamese Communists'
Will to Persist"**

26 August 1966

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**An Analysis of the Vietnamese Communists'
Strengths, Capabilities, and Will to Persist in Their
Present Strategy in Vietnam.**

26 AUGUST 1966

This memorandum has been produced by the Directorate of Intelligence of the Central Intelligence Agency. It was jointly prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence, the Office of Research and Reports, the Office of National Estimates, and the Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs in the Office of the Director of Central Intelligence.

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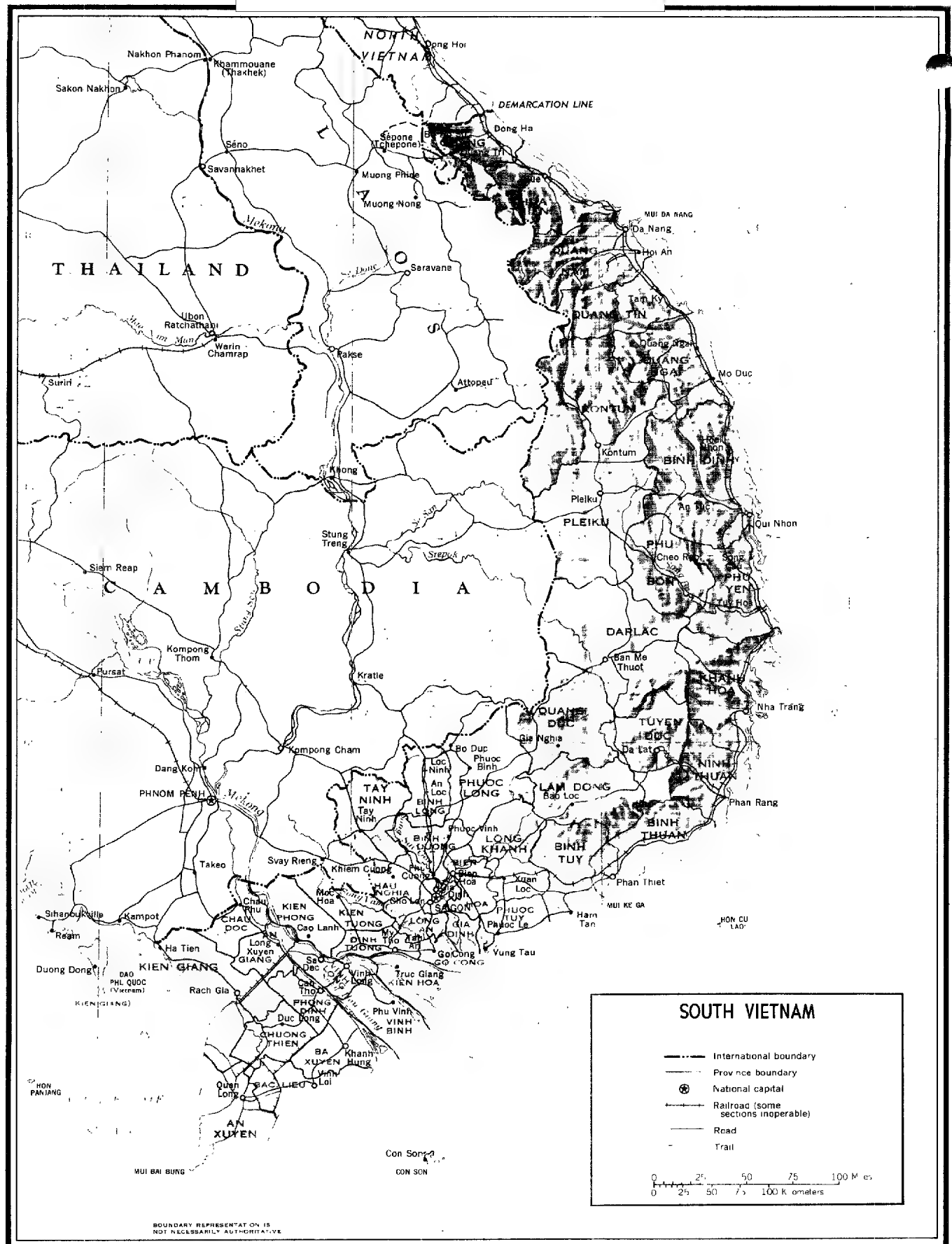
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SUMMARY DISCUSSION

I. Introduction

1. For thirty-six years the Vietnamese Communist Party has struggled unrelentingly to acquire political control of Vietnam. During this period the Vietnamese Communists have often altered their strategy but never their objective, which remains today what it was when the Party was founded in 1930. Since 1959 their strategy has focused on a "War of National Liberation"--a blend of military and political action in South Vietnam designed to erode non-Communist political authority, to create an aura of Communist invincibility, and, eventually, destroy the South Vietnamese and U.S. will to resist.

2. The Lao Dong (i.e., Vietnamese Communist) Party now controls only the government of North Vietnam (the DRV), but it is national in scope, even though, for cover purposes, its members in the South operate under the name of the "People's Revolutionary Party." It instigated the present insurgency and has controlled it from its inception. In every significant respect the Communist movement throughout Vietnam is a single political entity whose strengths, capabilities and strategic intentions cannot be properly assessed unless it is analyzed as such.*

II. The Vietnamese Communists' Investment in the Struggle

3. During the early years of insurgency, the Vietnamese Communists fought at negligible cost to the DRV itself. The Viet Cong's political apparatus and its military forces were almost entirely composed of ethnic southerners. Even cadre and technicians infiltrated from North Vietnam were primarily Southerners who had gone north in the post-1954 regroupment. The insurgents

*Additional details on Vietnamese Communist organization are given in Annex III.

lived off the land and obtained a large proportion of their supplies, including weapons and ammunition, from pre-1954 caches or capture from GVN forces. While the war ravaged the South, North Vietnam's own territory and economy were untouched. All of this, of course, has changed since 1961, and particularly since 1964. Hanoi's continued expansion of the insurgent effort has altered the complexion of the struggle and the ground rules under which it is waged.

4. This has required a drastic increase in the Communist investment. On a population base of around 18 million, North Vietnam now is supporting a military establishment of at least 400,000 men. By mid-1966 Hanoi was maintaining a force of at least 38,000 North Vietnamese troops to fight in the South. We estimate that this figure will rise to 60,000 by the end of 1966 and to 75,000 by mid-1967. Furthermore, to sustain its commitment in the struggle, North Vietnam has undergone partial mobilization and has had to divert at least 350,000 laborers to military or war-related tasks. North Vietnam's economy has been dislocated, its transportation system disrupted and the personal lives of its citizens adversely affected. To facilitate the dispatch of troops to South Vietnam and the external supplies they now require, Hanoi has had to develop and maintain an elaborate road and trail network through Laos in the face of continued interdiction and harassment.*

5. In South Vietnam, the Communists have developed an insurgent structure which includes an armed force estimated to be around 232,000 in addition to the 38,000 North Vietnamese troops already mentioned. This figure includes Viet Cong Main and Local Force troops, political cadre and combat support elements, and Southern Communist irregulars. Recently acquired documentary evidence, now being studied in detail,

*See Annex I for further details on North Vietnamese resources and capabilities.

suggests that our holdings on the numerical strength of these irregulars (now carried at around 110,000) may require drastic upward revision.* To direct the execution of their insurgent campaign, the Communists have developed a party apparatus in the South estimated to number around 100,000 members, supported by a somewhat smaller youth auxiliary.** The Communists have also probably enrolled around 700,000 people in some component of their front organization, the "National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam." This total apparatus must be controlled, funded and supplied, although most of its requirements may be met from resources within South Vietnam.

6. Casualties the Communists have incurred and are incurring in ever increasing numbers represent another major element of human cost. We estimate that total Communist losses in South Vietnam alone--killed in action, captured, seriously wounded and deserted--ranged from 80,000 to 90,000 during 1965, counting both North and South Vietnamese.*** We estimate that during 1966 these losses may range from 105,000 to 120,000. We further estimate that the Communists may incur an additional 65,000 to 75,000 losses during the first six months of 1967, if current rates of combat are maintained and presently projected troop strengths are achieved.

*Details on Communist military forces in South Vietnam are given in Annex IV.

**Around 25,000 party members and somewhere between 15,000 to 20,000 members of the youth auxiliary are thought to be serving in the Communist armed forces. They would be included in the military strength totals already cited. If our estimate of the number of Communist irregulars proves to require upward revision, our estimate of the size of the party apparatus in the South and of its youth auxiliary will also require compensating adjustments. Details on the Communist organization in South Vietnam are given in Annex III.

***See Annex IV.

III. Vietnamese Communist Capabilities for Persisting in Their Present Strategy

7. The Northern Base: North Vietnam's role in the present insurgency is that of a command and control center, a source of manpower and a channel of supplies. The command and control function is something relatively invulnerable to physical pressure or external assault. Present Communist strategy is imposing some strains on North Vietnam's manpower reserves, but the strains are more qualitative than quantitative, and they are not likely to become insurmountable. The major pressures on manpower have resulted from the Hanoi regime's inability to manage manpower effectively, a relative scarcity of technicians and skilled laborers, and an excessive drain on the agricultural labor force. Over the next 12 months North Vietnam should be able to meet the manpower requirements generated by its internal needs, as well as those generated by projected further deployments of troops to the South, but these needs will be met at increasing costs in the economic, educational and social fields.

8. North Vietnam's own industrial plant makes only the most marginal contribution to Vietnamese Communist military strength. With minor exceptions (e.g., a modest small arms ammunition manufacturing capability) the Vietnamese Communists' military hardware is entirely supplied from external sources. Thus Hanoi's ability to provide continued materiel assistance to Communist forces in South Vietnam is largely dependent on North Vietnam's continued receipt of materiel support from China, the Soviet Union and East European Communist countries.* So far, the US aerial pressure program has not appreciably impeded North Vietnam's receipt of materiel support from abroad and its dispatch to South Vietnam. Despite the disruptions inflicted, the North Vietnamese transport and logistic system is now functioning more effectively after almost 18 months of bombing than it did when the

*This aspect of Vietnamese Communist capability is discussed in detail in Annex II.

Rolling Thunder program started. Both internal transportation and infiltration traffic in 1966 were carried on at higher levels than in 1965. So long as the US air offensive remains at present levels, it is unlikely to diminish North Vietnam's continued ability to provide materiel support to the war in the South.

9. The Logistic Supply Network: Communist forces in South Vietnam are supplied with manpower and materiel primarily over the Communist-developed and -maintained network of about 650 miles of roads and trails through southern Laos, and to a lesser extent by sea or through Cambodia. Allied harassment and interdiction certainly complicate the Communist supply system. The volume of traffic now moving through Laos, however, is so much below route capacity that it is unlikely that conventional attack can ever reduce the capacity of the Laos trail network below the level required to sustain Communist efforts in South Vietnam. Communist forces use Cambodia with almost complete immunity from allied countermeasures and with minimal interference from the Cambodian government. US and South Vietnamese naval patrols have probably curtailed Communist sea infiltration, but given the extent and nature of South Vietnam's coastline and the amount of small boat traffic in South Vietnamese waters, even this channel can never be completely closed.

10. The Southern Apparatus: The buildup of both VC/NVN and allied forces in South Vietnam and the rising tempo of combat are placing appreciable strains on the Viet Cong's ability to support the war. The distribution of needed supplies, particularly foodstuffs, within South Vietnam has become extremely difficult. This problem has been aggravated by the concentration of VC forces in food-deficient areas.* Furthermore, the manpower squeeze on Viet Cong resources is becoming serious. The Viet Cong have borne the brunt of Communist personnel losses in South Vietnam and have also had to compensate for losses of North Vietnamese personnel. We believe that the Viet Cong capability to recruit and train manpower is adequate to cover losses estimated

*See Annex V.

for 1966 but will probably be inadequate to compensate for casualties and losses in 1967. During 1967 the North Vietnamese will have to assume most of the burden of expanding force levels, and an increasing role in replacing losses. These manpower requirements can almost certainly be met from North Vietnamese resources, but they will impose additional strains on North Vietnam's limited supply of skilled personnel and leadership cadre.

11. Apart from military manpower requirements, documentary evidence indicates that the Communist political apparatus in South Vietnam is already stretched thin and is not considered by the Communists themselves as fully adequate to their needs, particularly in urban areas. Cadre and leadership shortages will almost certainly increase in the months ahead. Although these shortages can be ameliorated by additional personnel dispatched from North Vietnam, the injection of an increasing number of northerners into the Southern apparatus will of itself produce some measure of discord within the Communist movement. Although the Viet Cong personnel needs are not likely to prevent the Vietnamese Communists from persisting in their present strategy, they almost certainly represent the weakest link in the Communists' capability chain.

12. Net Capability Assessment: The Communists' present strategy is costly in both human and economic terms and is taxing Communist resources in some areas, particularly within South Vietnam itself. Allied actions are complicating Communist efforts and raising the costs of their execution. However, neither internal resource shortages nor allied actions within present political parameters are likely to render the Vietnamese Communists physically incapable of persisting in their present strategy.

IV. The Vietnamese Communists' Probable Estimate of The Current State of the Struggle

13. The Communists' evaluation of the war and estimate of its future course will involve interlocked judgments on a variety of key factors, some of which are discussed below.

14. The Communists' "Time Table": The Communists almost certainly do not have any fixed or rigid time table for victory. Their consideration of where they stand now, however, must in some measure be influenced by earlier estimates of where they had expected to be in mid-1966. Analysis of available documentary evidence suggests that in the 1959-1960 era, Hanoi's rulers thought it would take at least five years of all-out military and political action to gain control over South Vietnam. Until about 1962, the Communists appear to have been reasonably satisfied with the progress of their insurgent movement and to have felt that things were going more or less as planned. The counterinsurgency efforts of the Diem regime after 1962, however, and the expanded US advisory/support program confronted the Communists with unwelcome obstacles and led them to conclude that the conquest of South Vietnam would take longer than they had originally estimated.*

15. During 1964, as the Communists watched the continuing political disarray in Saigon, and devised tactics to cope with the increased U.S. assistance, Communist documents discussing the war grew progressively more optimistic. Communist optimism apparently reached its apex in the spring of 1965. They still carefully refrained from tying "victory" to a definite calendar date, but the Communists appear to have believed that they were then perhaps within a year or two of achieving a major part of their objectives. They had every reason to be optimistic in the spring of 1965; the GVN's strategic reserve was stretched to the breaking point, and the Communists were scoring tactical military successes with considerable cumulative political impact.

16. The massive infusion of US combat strength which began in mid-1965 probably saved the GVN from defeat and certainly disabused the Communists of any hopes of early victory. Their propaganda began to shift away from the theme of early victory to its present theme of inevitable victory. During 1966, Communist documents and public pronouncements have indicated that the Communists

*See Annex VIII.

expect a long war. The Communists must be disappointed in comparing the present situation with that which existed in the spring of 1965. At least indirectly, they have acknowledged that the infusion of US and Allied combat forces has created new problems which must be overcome before victory can be won. Yet Communist realism is presently tinged more with defiance than pessimism; the Communists may be disappointed, but they do not yet seem to be discouraged.

17. The Lessons of the Franco - Viet Minh War: Present Vietnamese Communist strategy is appreciably influenced by the 1946-1954 struggle in which the Communist-controlled Viet Minh forced the French to withdraw from Vietnam. In Communist eyes, probably the most significant feature of this earlier successful campaign was the fact it was won without inflicting a strategic defeat on the French Military Forces.* During their nine-year struggle, the Communists successfully used military pressure as a political abrasive. They worked more on French will than on French strategic capabilities, and eventually succeeded in making the struggle a politically unsaleable commodity in metropolitan France. Communist strategy, in short, succeeded in creating a climate in which the government in Paris lost its will to fight even though the French Expeditionary Corps remained effective and largely intact as a military force. The Communists suffered horrendous casualties and went through periods of severe setback, but their persistence eventually paid off.

18. Soviet and Chinese Support** There is substantial evidence that the political positions of the Soviet Union and Communist China vis-a-vis the Vietnam struggle, and the amount of military assistance they both provide, are major influences on Vietnamese Communist policy. A cessation of bloc war aid would probably make

*The battle of Dienbienphu was a major tactical--rather than strategic--reverse for the French. It certainly did not destroy the French Expeditionary Corps as an effective military entity.

**See Annex II.

it impossible for the Vietnamese Communists to sustain their struggle at its present level of intensity. Hanoi recognizes, however, that contemporary international Communist politics make such a cessation highly unlikely. Hanoi views bloc support as valuable in sustaining, and in some ways increasing, the military pressure which the Communists can bring to bear in South Vietnam and also sees it as a factor which at least partially inhibits and offsets the military pressure which allied forces can impose directly on North Vietnam. So long as bloc aid continues at least at its present levels, however, it will probably not be a critical factor in any basic determination the Vietnamese Communists might make on whether to continue the conflict. North Vietnamese assertions that, in the final analysis, they must rely mainly on their own resources to prosecute the revolution appear to reflect a genuine and deeply-held belief. Hanoi apparently believes that there are distinct limits to the amount of political and material support which it can count on from Peking and Moscow. Furthermore, the Vietnamese would not want to receive a degree of external (i.e., Chinese) aid that would jeopardize their control of the war, unless such aid were required to prevent the extinction of the Communist regime in North Vietnam.

19. Despite Peking's willingness to pressure Hanoi, the Chinese probably could not force the Vietnamese Communists to stay in the war if they decided of their own volition to end the fighting. The Vietnamese probably estimate that, in view of the limitations on the Chinese commitment, Peking would do little more than complain if the conflict were terminated short of an insurgent victory. The Chinese, in fact, seem to recognize this, for they have repeatedly left themselves an out by emphasizing that all decisions on the war are "strictly" up to the Vietnamese.

20. On the basis of Moscow's assistance so far, the Vietnamese probably judge that the Soviet commitment in the war is considerably more restrained than that of the Chinese. Hanoi is fully aware that Moscow, like Peking, is anxious to avoid steps which might lead to a direct military confrontation with the U.S. It is also doubtless clear to the Vietnamese that the Soviets

would welcome an early end to the war. On balance, however, it is probable that Soviet backing has the effect of buttressing the Vietnamese Communist will to persist in the conflict. The Vietnamese probably judge that they can continue to count indefinitely on Moscow's assistance along present lines so long as the war continues in its present context. They probably believe, in fact, that the Soviets now are locked into a struggle in view of Moscow's desire to retain leadership of the Communist camp.

21. The Course of the Military Struggle in the South: Any objective assessment the Communists make of the course of the military struggle in South Vietnam will acknowledge that although they may not be losing the war at the present time, they are certainly not winning it. They have gone for months without a major tactical success. They are suffering severe and increasing casualties. They no longer enjoy a virtual monopoly of the initiative. Their base areas are no longer virtually sacrosanct; instead they are increasingly subject not only to aerial harassment but also to penetration by allied troops. Their plans are constantly being disrupted by allied spoiling actions, to which Communists must react either by fleeing or by fighting an unplanned engagement. The absolute strength of the forces with which the Communists must contend is steadily increasing. The time-honored guerrilla principle of ensuring numerical superiority at the point of attack has been undercut by the mobility of allied forces who cover ground by helicopter instead of by road. The Communists are far from being defeated, but they are faced with problems greater than any they have had to contend with before in this struggle. Furthermore, for the time being at least, Communist forces have lost the aura of invincibility which in days past (and in the Franco - Viet Minh war) was one of the Communists' most potent political assets.

22. The Price Being Paid in the North:* The air strikes against North Vietnam have created problems for

*See Annex I

the Communists, but in both military and economic terms, the damage inflicted so far has probably not exceeded what the Communists regard as acceptable levels. In most cases the reconstruction or repair of damaged facilities can be postponed or effectively achieved by cheap and temporary expedients. In both financial and material terms, the cost inflicted on North Vietnam by allied aerial attack is more than covered by the military and economic aid and technical assistance provided by other Communist countries. Although economic growth has stagnated and will probably deteriorate further in the coming year, air attacks conducted under present rules of engagement almost certainly cannot stop North Vietnamese activities essential to the support of the Communist war effort. In short, North Vietnam is taking punishment in its own territory, but a price it can afford and one it probably considers acceptable in light of the political objectives it hopes to achieve.

23. Communist Capabilities For Additional Force Commitment: In absolute numerical terms the Communists cannot hope to match present and projected allied force commitments. However, it is extremely unlikely that they feel any need to do so. An analysis of relative force levels shows that the apparent present free world superiority of six to one over VC/NVA Forces is largely eliminated when one compares the relative ratios of actual maneuver battalions--i.e., tactical combat troops available for commitment to offensive ground operations.* The present ratio of allied to Communist maneuver battalions is nearly one to one. If present estimates of allied and Communist force projections are accurate, by mid-1967 the Communists will have a slight advantage in this critical ratio. The Communists almost certainly feel that if they can maintain a maneuver battalion ratio in this range, they will be able to prolong the struggle indefinitely and wear down U.S. will to persist.

24. The Calculation of International Attitudes:**
There is considerable evidence that the Vietnamese

*Maneuver battalion ratios are analyzed in detail in Annex IV.

**See Annex X.

Communists believe popular opposition throughout the Western world to U.S. policy in Vietnam can be an important political factor in the ultimate outcome of the struggle. Even though Hanoi appears to be concerned with the Vietnamese Communists' relatively limited ability to spur Western agitation against the allied policy by dint of their own propaganda apparatus, they obviously welcome the widespread belief that the struggle in South Vietnam has its roots in what is essentially a southern civil war and not, as Washington claims, in North Vietnamese aggression. Consideration of world popular opposition to U.S. policy would certainly enter into any eventual Vietnamese Communist decision on whether to revise present strategy but would almost certainly not be a decisive factor.

25. The Calculation of U.S. Domestic Attitudes: The Vietnamese Communists pay close attention to evidence of opposition to current U.S. policy arising within the United States itself. Despite some occasional signs of realism about the actual political force of such opposition, by and large the Vietnamese Communists almost certainly overestimate its present strength. Detailed knowledge of the realities of U.S. domestic politics is a fairly scarce commodity in Hanoi. Furthermore, not only do the Communists want to believe that there is strong American domestic opposition to current U.S. policy, but the course and eventual outcome of their previous struggle with the French almost certainly predisposes them to draw invalid parallels to French domestic opposition in the Indochina war and to look for signs of American domestic political pressures capable of forcing policy changes on Washington.

26. The Communists also appear to believe that the U.S. cannot match the continued input of North Vietnamese forces into the struggle (particularly in light of the maneuver battalion comparison outlined above) without going on a virtual wartime footing. They believe this would involve at least partial mobilization and create economic pressures which would drastically increase American opposition to the war, particularly as casualties continue. The Communists may hope that all of these pressures would be sufficiently unpopular within the U.S. to make the war politically unsaleable.

27. Morale in North Vietnam:* The wearing effects of the war are causing some decline of civilian morale in North Vietnam, and there are indications the regime fears there may be a further deterioration. The decline, however, has not had any meaningful impact upon the determination of the regime to continue with the war or the policy options it may elect to achieve its objectives.

28. Communist Morale in South Vietnam:** Morale within Communist military forces and the political apparatus in South Vietnam has declined since mid-1965. It is conceivable that at some future point, the prospect of indefinite struggle if not defeat could break the morale of key elements of the Communist southern apparatus. Although Communist morale is obviously fraying badly in some parts of the insurgent structure, nowhere has it yet deteriorated to the point where the battle performance of Communist units is adversely affected. It has certainly not declined to a point presently sufficient to force any major revision in the basic Communist strategy.

29. Attitudes Among the People in Viet Cong Areas:*** There is a substantial body of evidence that morale and, consequently, support for the Communist cause, is dropping in Viet Cong - controlled areas of South Vietnam. The flow of refugees from such areas has increased drastically, and even if a desire for safety is the main motive for this exodus, the exodus itself attests to popular realization that no Viet Cong region is now immune from attack. Furthermore, there are indications that the refugee flow is caused not only by a quest for safety but also by a desire to escape increasingly onerous Communist levies of taxation, forced labor and

*See Annex I.

**The critical subject of morale in Communist Forces is the subject of Annex VI.

***This subject is examined in detail in Annex VII.

conscription. Even though distaste for the Viet Cong is not necessarily positive support for Saigon, this shift in popular attitude could eventually cause the Communists serious problems.

30. The Course of South Vietnamese Political Development: Communist prospects obviously brighten perceptibly during periods of political turmoil within South Vietnam. Conversely, the development of a popularly rooted, viable non-Communist South Vietnamese state is the thing which, over the longer term, the Communists have the greatest reason to fear. Hanoi cannot ignore the fact that although the present Saigon regime is fragile, is far from effective or genuinely popular, and is beset with internal stress, it has nonetheless successfully weathered storms which several of its predecessors were unable to survive. The Communists must also recognize that the events of last spring made painfully manifest how weak they were in urban areas and how limited were their capabilities for capitalizing on political strife among contending non-Communist factions. While the present Saigon government would probably stand no chance of unaided survival in a contest with the Viet Cong, even if all North Vietnamese troops were withdrawn from South Vietnam, there are trends in South Vietnamese political life which are probably a source of disquiet to the Communists. Furthermore, they must recognize that the type of political activity represented by the Rural Development program, even if it is only moderately successful, strikes at the roots of their insurgency's indigenous strength and alters one of the necessary conditions for a successful "war of national liberation" strategy.

V. Probable Communist Near-Term Military and Political Strategy*

31. If they are objective, the Communists must acknowledge that during the past year their insurgent campaign has lost momentum in both the military and political fields. There are signs that the Communists have indeed recognized that developments of the past year have created problems which they must solve,

*Discussed in further detail in Annex XI.

along with a situation quite different from that which they faced in fighting the French. Acknowledgment of the existence of these problems does seem to have provoked debates over strategy within the Communist hierarchy, but there is no present sign of any Communist intent to abandon or significantly alter the Communists' present strategy.

32. This strategy in the near term will probably revolve around two major efforts: (1) to keep intact, as far as possible, Main Force units in South Vietnam, and (2) to build up the Main Force strength, both in quantity and in quality, in order to be able to counter allied power when US forces in Vietnam have built up to the level of 400,000 expected by the Communists at the end of 1966. The North Vietnamese leaders probably believe that if they can go into 1967 with an ability to field a Main Force strength of about 125,000, as compared to a US strength of 400,000, they will be able to continue the war. Hanoi probably estimates that a four-to-one absolute military manpower advantage in favor of the US will not be enough for the US to defeat the insurgents; even under these conditions the Communists will be able to match allied forces in maneuver battalions.

33. Analysis of Communist materials indicates that the military strategy of the Communists during the coming months will be largely a continuation of their operational concepts of 1964 and 1965. They will concentrate mainly on opening simultaneous campaigns in the highlands and the area northwest of Saigon, combined with occasional other major actions in the northern coastal provinces. The latter may accelerate as the northeast monsoons begin. Their primary aim will be to stretch the allied forces as thin as possible and inflict as many casualties as possible on allied units. The primary target of the Communists during the coming months will probably be U.S. forces, rather than South Vietnamese. The Communists will continue their attempts to reduce American military mobility and striking power by harassment and by concentration of Communist forces around U.S. base areas to tie down as many Americans as possible in static defense tasks.

34. To keep U.S. and other allied forces from hitting and hurting large Communist units, the insurgents will probably stick primarily to ambushes, hit-and-run strikes, and guerrilla harassment in situations where they believe the odds of success are decidedly in their favor. Should favorable conditions arise, however, they will almost certainly attempt to conduct operations in regimental strength and greater. The Communists will be working in the meantime on efforts at better concealment of the locations of their main force units in order to counter the improved allied intelligence on the tactical disposition of Communist elements. When large-scale battles occur, the Communists may attempt to devolve them into a series of skirmishes in which Communist ambush and hit-and-run tactics can be used more effectively against small-sized elements of the allied attacking force.

35. On the political side, Communist strategy and goals for the remainder of 1966 and early 1967 will have to take account of recent insurgent setbacks. Captured documents indicate that the Communists will give priority to strengthening and improving their political apparatus, notably by trying to improve the quality of political cadres down to the village level, and by continued emphasis on the recruitment of party members and sympathizers in both rural and urban areas. They will probably continue to concentrate their subversive efforts on the South Vietnamese army and civil service. Laboring class elements may also attract increasing attention in the hope that economic discontent with the inflation spiral in South Vietnam can be exploited to the insurgents' advantage.

36. There is an increasing number of reports that the Communists will make serious efforts to disrupt the constitutional assembly election on 11 September. It is doubtful at this time that the Communists themselves have any significant number of followers among the candidates who have filed, though many of the candidates are relative unknowns even to local government officials. Communist propaganda statements have vigorously denounced the coming election as a farce and a trick. The Communists may feel impelled to take an active role through covert campaigning against candidates, or through terrorism and other direct sabotage efforts.

VI. Key Trends and Factors

37. In addition to their own logistic, manpower and morale problems, future Communist strategic decisions will probably be primarily influenced by developments in three areas: the course of South Vietnam's political evolution, the course of the military struggle in South Vietnam, and the attitude of the United States--or, more accurately, their estimate of American will and the US Government's political ability to persevere. The Communists, for example, will be paying particular attention to the outcome of the September elections in Vietnam and their resultant effect on South Vietnamese political stability and strength; Communist success or failure in matching allied maneuver battalion strength and achieving at least some tactical successes; and the outcome and import--or what the Communists believe to be the import--of next November's elections in the United States.

VII. The Day of Decision

38. The timing of any Vietnamese Communist decision on altering basic strategy--and the nature of such a decision--will be greatly affected by a variety of considerations including those outlined in the preceding paragraph. We estimate that none of the pressures upon the Communists which we can now identify is severe enough to force a major change in Communist strategy over the next eight to nine months. The Communists would be even less inclined to alter their strategy if they should find political and military developments during this period running in their favor--for example, serious political deterioration in South Vietnam, a series of major Viet Cong military successes, or what they construe as a significant rise of anti-war sentiment in the United States. If on the other hand pressures on them are maintained, and the course of events gives them no grounds for encouragement, they will probably feel compelled by late spring of 1967 to take stock and consider a change in their basic strategy.

VIII. Alternate Communist Strategic Options

39. Should the Vietnamese Communists decide at this point that continuation of their insurgency along current lines would not be profitable, they would have three basic policy options. They could: (1) convert the struggle into a major war by inviting massive Chinese Communist military intervention; (2) relax Communist pressure and withdraw some North Vietnamese troops, in the hope that the appearance of tranquility would eventually impel the US to disengage the better part of its forces without any formal commitments from the Communists in return; or (3) enter into some form of negotiations.

40. We believe Option (1) is the option the Vietnamese Communists would consider least in their long-term interests. Option (2), despite some advantages, would entail major problems for the Communists. It carries no guarantee that the U.S. would in fact disengage, and puts the Communists in a position of bidding by successive increments to bring this about. It would engender serious morale problems for the Communists during a protracted stand-down without simultaneous U.S. response. It would be hard to explain as anything but acknowledgement of a serious reverse for long-range Communist objectives.

41. In our view, the Vietnamese Communists would be most likely to try some variant of Option (3)-- negotiation. They would hope initially to achieve a reduction of allied offensive pressure, including a suspension of bombing in the North.* They would probably work to keep the talks going in order to prolong such a respite. During the course of the negotiations, they would probably determine whether they would seriously explore the possibilities of an acceptable political solution, or examine the alternative courses still open to them.

*Communist behavior in periods of negotiation is examined in Annex XII.

PRINCIPAL FINDINGS

1. So long as the U.S. air offensive remains at present levels, it is unlikely to diminish North Vietnam's continued ability to provide materiel support to the war in the South. North Vietnam is taking punishment on its own territory, but at a price it can afford and one it probably considers acceptable in light of the political objectives it hopes to achieve.

2. The Viet Cong have borne the brunt of Communist personnel losses in South Vietnam and have also had to compensate for losses of North Vietnamese personnel. We believe that the Viet Cong capability to recruit and train manpower is adequate to cover losses estimated for 1966 but will probably be inadequate to compensate for casualties and losses in 1967. During 1967 the North Vietnamese will have to assume most of the burden of expanding force levels, and an increasing role in replacing losses. These manpower requirements can almost certainly be met from North Vietnamese resources, but they will impose additional strains on North Vietnam's limited supply of skilled personnel and leadership cadre.

3. The Communists' present strategy is costly in both human and economic terms and is taxing Communist resources in some areas, particularly within South Vietnam itself. Allied actions are complicating Communist efforts and raising the costs of their execution. However, neither internal resource shortages nor allied actions within present political parameters are likely to render the Vietnamese Communists physically incapable of persisting in their present strategy.

4. In absolute numerical terms the Communists cannot hope to match present and projected Allied force commitments. However, if present estimates of Allied and Communist force projections are accurate, by mid-1967 the Communists will have a slight advantage in maneuver battalions--i.e., tactical combat troops available for commitment to offensive ground operations.

5. Nevertheless, if they are objective, the Communists must acknowledge that during the past year their

insurgent campaign has lost momentum in both the military and political fields. Although they may not be losing the war at the present time, they are certainly not winning it. The Communists are far from being defeated; but they are faced with problems greater than any they have had to contend with before in this struggle. Furthermore, Communist forces have at least temporarily lost the aura of invincibility which was one of their most potent political assets.

6. Morale within Communist military forces and the political apparatus in South Vietnam has declined since mid-1965 but not to a point presently sufficient to force any major revision in basic Communist strategy.

7. The Communists must be disappointed in comparing the present situation with that which existed in the spring of 1965. At least indirectly, they have acknowledged that the infusion of U.S. and Allied combat forces has created new problems which must be overcome before victory can be won. Yet Communist realism is presently tinged more with defiance than pessimism; the Communists may be disappointed, but they do not yet seem to be discouraged.

8. Consideration of world popular opposition to U.S. policy would certainly enter into any eventual Vietnamese Communist decision on whether to revise present strategy but would most certainly not be a decisive factor.

9. The Vietnamese Communists pay close attention to evidence of opposition to current U.S. policy arising within the United States itself. The outcome of their previous struggle with the French almost certainly predisposes them to draw invalid parallels to French domestic opposition in the Indochina war and to look for signs of American domestic political pressures capable of forcing policy changes on Washington.

10. The timing of any Vietnamese Communist decision on altering basic strategy--and the nature of such a decision--will be greatly affected by a variety of considerations, including those outlined in this paper. We estimate that none of the pressures upon the Communists

which we can now identify is severe enough to force a major change in Communist strategy over the next eight to nine months. The Communists would be even less inclined to alter their strategy if they should find political and military developments during this period running in their favor--for example, serious political deterioration in South Vietnam, a series of major Viet Cong military successes, or what they construe as a significant rise of anti-war sentiment in the United States. If on the other hand pressures on them are maintained and the course of events gives them no grounds for encouragement, by late spring of 1967 they will probably feel compelled to take stock and consider a change in their basic strategy.

ANNEX I

THE ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND LOGISTIC RESOURCES
AND CAPABILITIES OF THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS

ANNEX ITHE ECONOMIC, MILITARY AND LOGISTIC
RESOURCES AND CAPABILITIES OF
THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTSI. North VietnamA. Manpower1. The Population Base

The manpower problem in North Vietnam, viewed solely in terms of numbers, is not yet acute, although in a qualitative sense it is becoming more severe. In spite of substantial manpower levies the country still has a wide range of unused opportunities to replace men with women, to withdraw males from sectors where labor is underemployed, and to transfer labor from nonessential or postponable tasks. North Vietnam has not yet had to resort to full mobilization.

The population of North Vietnam as of 1 January 1966 is estimated at between 17.9 and 19.2 million persons. (See Table I-1) North Vietnam's manpower resources for military service consist of 4.1-4.5 million males in the 15-49 age group of which 2.1-2.3 are physically fit for military duty. Over 110,000 physically fit males reach draft age each year.

Table I-1

Estimated Manpower Available for
Military Service in North Vietnam
1 January 1966

	Thousand Persons					
	Total		Males		Females	
	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u>
Total population	17,895	19,210	8,730	9,374	9,165	9,836
Persons age 15-49	8,561	9,182	4,146	4,457	4,415	4,725
Those physically fit for military service	--	--	2,110	2,267	--	--
Persons of draft age (18)	--	--	175	188	--	--
Those physically fit for military service	--	--	107	115	--	--

2. The Manpower Drain

The major drains on manpower resources in North Vietnam have resulted from the build-up of the armed forces, the reallocation of labor to military support activities and the repair or reconstruction of bomb damaged facilities, particularly the lines of communication in North Vietnam and Laos.

We are not able to give precise estimates of the extent to which mobilization has taken place in North Vietnam. It is apparent that mobilization of manpower for military duty or military support activities has not reached a point of exhausting North Vietnam's manpower resources, although it has placed an increasing drain on administrative and management skills. Unless the US greatly stepped up its bombing, North Vietnam could make substantial increases in its armed forces and make additional manpower inputs into military support activities without placing an inordinately severe strain on its manpower resources.

Current estimates of the build-up of NVA forces in the past year indicate that a minimum of 125,000 persons were called for military duty. To this total should be added those numbers of NVA personnel infiltrating into South Vietnam, not as part of the build-up of NVA forces there, but as replacements and fillers for killed or seriously wounded NVA troops. 8,000 infiltrators can be placed in this category for 1965 and 10-30,000 for 1966 according to current estimates of the rates of infiltration and build-up of NVA forces in South Vietnam. On this basis we can estimate that certainly over 150,000 persons have already been called into military service. This total is about 70 percent of the number of physically fit males reaching draft age during 1965 and 1966. Even if the North Vietnamese armed forces should expand by 25 percent--to 500,000 persons--the drain on manpower resources for military service in numerical terms would not approach burdensome proportions.

In addition to the manpower drain for military service, the North Vietnamese have had to reallocate labor to repair or reconstruction activities and to tasks associated with dispersal programs and emergency activities. These programs require the full-time services of 200,000 workers and the part-time utilization of another 100,000. An additional diversion of the labor force results from

the obligation of some 150,000 persons to fulfill civil defense obligations on a part-time basis.

Excluding the part-time diversions of labor, the measurable mobilization of manpower to date for military duty or war-associated tasks would seem to involve a minimum of 350,000 persons. This commitment could be at least 450,000 persons if the armed forces were to expand to 500,000 persons. The commitment would be even greater if air strikes against the logistics target system increased and could amount to an additional 40,000-50,000 persons. The additions to the labor force probably need not be greater because of the large amount of work already done in expanding the road system and building by-passes and other temporary crossings. The main thrust of future labor efforts will be in maintenance and repair of this expanded road system. However, the requirement for an additional 40,000-50,000 persons could create additional strains on North Vietnam's limited resources of skilled manpower.

3. Alternative Sources of Manpower

North Vietnam has several alternatives to be used in drawing upon its labor force of over 9.5 million people to replace the manpower mobilized for military and war-related activities. A primary source for the replacement of manpower diverted to mobilization programs is the large number of women in the labor force. Over 1.7 million women are reported by Hanoi to be ready to replace men in the labor force. We have little evidence, however, to support a judgment that the number of females in the labor force has increased significantly since mobilization measures began in April 1965. As late as October 1965 the regime still claimed that women accounted for 60 percent of the agricultural labor force, the same percentage claimed before mobilization. (See Table I-2)

In addition to the possibilities of women replacing men in the labor force, Hanoi has several alternative resources for manpower. The natural annual increment to the total labor force is in the order of 350,000 persons a year. We also estimate that from 300,000-350,000 males could be released from trade and services enterprises, institutions and educational establishments without disrupting essential economic activity. Finally there are

Table I-2

Civilian Labor Force of North Vietnam with Sex Breakdown a/
1 January 1966

	Thousand Persons		
	<u>Total</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Total	<u>9,522</u>	<u>4,482</u>	<u>5,040</u>
Production and Distribution	<u>8,700</u>	N.A.	N.A.
Agriculture	7,000	2,800	4,200
Industry	806	494	312
State-owned	(206)	(146)	(60)
Handicrafts	(600)	(348)	(252)
Construction	200	138	62
Transport and Communications	328	N.A.	N.A.
State-owned	(106)	N.A.	N.A.
Non-State	(222)	N.A.	N.A.
Trade	282	171	111
State-owned	(75)	(51)	(24)
Non-State	(207)	(120)	(87)
Other	84	N.A.	N.A.
Services	<u>822</u>	N.A.	N.A.
Administration	74	70	4
Banking	8	7	1
Consumer Services	402	233	169
Culture, education, science	187	130	57
Medicine and social services	83	49	34
Civil Defense	1	N.A.	N.A.
Other	67	N.A.	N.A.

a. Employment data refer to full-time labor force in various branches. Unless otherwise indicated, figures on total work force in various branches are taken from North Vietnamese official data for 1963. Increases in employment in these branches that may have occurred during 1964 are assumed to be counterbalanced in 1965 by diversion of workers from their normal occupations to the regular armed forces, and to employment in construction and transportation.

substantial numbers--35,000-65,000--of draft-age male students at the college and high school level that would be available if full mobilization were undertaken.

4. Pressures on Manpower

Mobilization in North Vietnam has not dried up the pool of excess labor. Although the manpower situation is tight the regime for the most part still avoids coercive programs in channeling workers into essential jobs. The withdrawal of manpower from production has not resulted in many of the austerity measures which would be associated with full mobilization. Rationing of food has been within moderate limits, agricultural taxes have not increased nor have food and cloth imports increased significantly. School enrollments in 1966, of the 14-21 age group, are reported by the regime to be double the level of last year. With the exception of some disruption to normal routine and some minor deprivations, there are few indications that the population has been asked to make extreme sacrifices in support of the war effort.

The major pressures on manpower result from the regime's inability to manage manpower effectively, a relative scarcity of skilled manpower, and an excessive drain on the agricultural labor force.

The management problems reflect the difficulties associated with a rapid transfer of masses of low-level workers to essential wartime tasks. The transfers effected to date were disorderly and poorly planned and resulted in uneven and unproductive allocations of the labor force. The drain of manpower from agriculture was, for example, an important factor in the disappointing fifth-month harvest. At the same time the regime found that the allocation of workers to construction work camps was apparently so excessive or irrational that some of these workers could be returned to the agricultural labor force or to other production tasks.

Skilled manpower resources in North Vietnam total about 300,000 workers or only 3 percent of the civilian labor force. This total is inadequate to meet all the requirements of mobilization and normal economic activity. The strain on these resources has been reduced somewhat by the presence of an estimated 25,000-45,000 men in Chinese Communist engineer units engaged in railroad and airfield .

construction work in the northern part of North Vietnam. Despite this Chinese technical assistance the supply of skilled manpower remains tight. Water conservancy which is vital to agriculture is one area where the shortage of skilled manpower seems to be particularly acute. In the spring of 1966 the regime noted that it had become difficult to man water conservancy brigades because of the loss of cadres to wartime tasks.

5. Prospects

If the commitment of manpower to regular military forces over the next twelve months does not exceed currently estimated levels, North Vietnam should be able to meet its manpower requirements but at an increasing cost to other economic, educational and social programs.

Although in terms of numbers the North Vietnamese have adequate manpower to replace losses and to build-up forces in South Vietnam, there are factors that may reduce their enthusiasm for sustaining this drain. The manpower being sent to South Vietnam is in qualitative terms probably the best the country can muster. Its loss over the long term is not one to be borne lightly by any power. Moreover, even though North Vietnam probably can meet its basic manpower commitment in South Vietnam, there is considerable drain on manpower within North Vietnam and the prospects are good that this drain will increase as the air war requires greater reconstruction efforts and as a lagging agriculture requires additional inputs of manpower. Finally an increasing scarcity of skilled manpower and qualified leaders--both military and economic--should make the drain of North Vietnam's manpower an increasingly difficult burden.

If the manpower drain does become acute, it will probably be in the area of agricultural manpower. In February 1966 the regime felt that the agricultural labor force could remain stable at about 7 million persons, that annual withdrawals would be almost exactly balanced by the normal annual addition to the work force. By April 1966 the regime had apparently concluded that this balance was too low and that a reallocation of labor back into agriculture was necessary. We do not know if this reallocation has been made. However, the disappointing fifth-month harvest makes it likely that the regime will be compelled to provide more

agricultural manpower in order to achieve a successful 10th month harvest. If the regime is unsuccessful in this effort, strong pressures will develop in early 1967 for an even greater commitment of manpower to agriculture. This probably could not be accomplished without disrupting the operations of other sectors of the economy, particularly if the reallocation of manpower to agriculture involves large numbers of skilled workers.

B. Effects of the Rolling Thunder Program

1. Economic and Military Target System

Damage caused by air strikes against economic and military facilities and equipment in North Vietnam through June 1966 amounted to \$86 million of which \$52 million were sustained by the economy and \$34 million by the military.* (See Figure I-1)

If the bombing of North Vietnam persists during the 12-months to mid-1967 along the same scale and character (exclusive of the strikes against petroleum storage) as during the first five months of 1966** an additional \$38 million of damage to the economy may be expected. The cost of replacing the destroyed bulk petroleum facilities will total an additional \$4 million. The total cumulative measurable damage to the economy of North Vietnam by mid-1967 will then total \$94 million.

Damage inflicted to military facilities and equipment during the first five months of bombing during 1966 (February through June) amounted to only \$7 million and was exceedingly low when compared with 1965. The bulk of this loss consisted of the destruction of aircraft and

*These dollar costs assigned to bomb damage are values indicating a general measure of the effectiveness of the bombing program. They are not intended to indicate immediate outlays which have to be undertaken by the Hanoi regime.

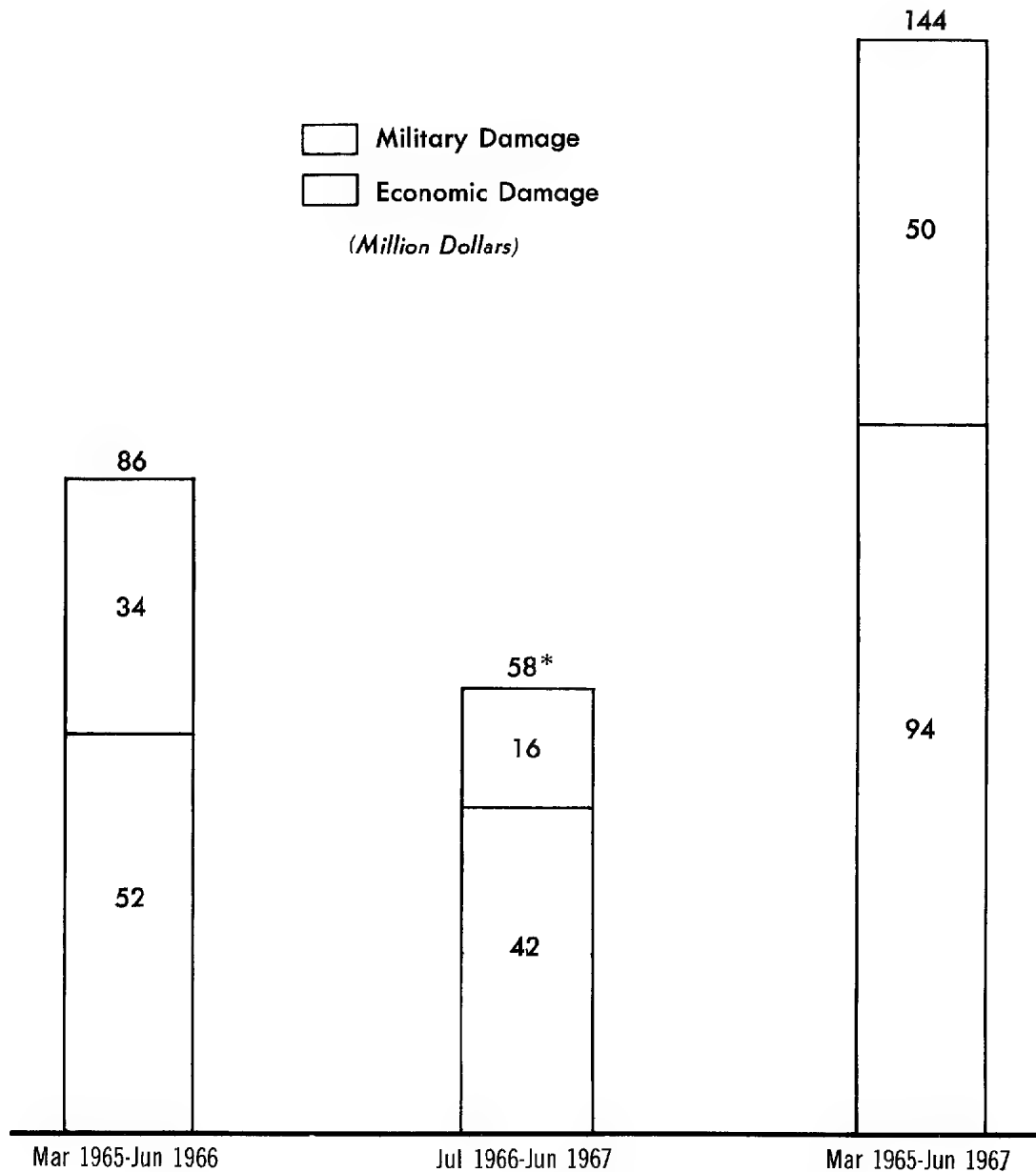
**There was a pause in the bombing of North Vietnam from 24 December 1965 through 30 January 1966.

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Figure I-1

MILITARY AND ECONOMIC DAMAGE RESULTING FROM AIR ATTACKS AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM

March 1965 - June 1966 and Projected July 1966 - June 1967



**Projection based on scale and character of air strikes during first five months of 1966*

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AND DECLASSIFICATION

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naval craft. No important military barracks and supply depots were attacked because of their location in sanctuary areas. The average monthly damage to military facilities and equipment amounted to about \$1.3 million. On the assumption that the air war will continue against military targets at about this scale during the forthcoming twelve months, the total loss sustained by military targets will amount to only \$16 million. The total cumulative damage to military facilities and equipment as of mid-1967 will then be about \$50 million.

Using the same assumptions, we estimate that the cumulative economic and military damage as a consequence of the Rolling Thunder program will total \$144 million by mid-1967. In addition, there are and will be other losses and indirect costs to the economy and the military establishment to which values cannot be assigned.

Losses at this level will not present a significant drain on North Vietnam's resources. Much of the cost represents damages to facilities such as military barracks which are not in active use, or to facilities such as bridges which do not require permanent repair. The North Vietnamese have chosen so far not to repair the damaged petroleum storage facilities. The only known reconstruction of the damaged electric power stations has been Uong Bi station and this presumably has been done by or with the help of Russian technicians.

The damage sustained by air attacks against North Vietnam is in large measure a bill that can be passed to the USSR and Communist China. The increasing aid commitments of these countries far overshadow the small dollar value of the damage caused by air attack. These commitments imply an obligation on the part of the USSR and Communist China to underwrite the economic restoration of the country on favorable terms and explain in large measure Hanoi's attitude toward the loss of its modern economic facilities.

2. Effects of the Air Attacks at Present Levels

a. Economic

The bulk petroleum storage facilities in North Vietnam represent the first important military/economic target system attacked in depth by the Rolling Thunder

program apart from the sporadic strikes against transportation in the northern part of the country. The neutralization of the petroleum storage system will present Hanoi and its allies with an immediate problem in improvising an adequate flow of petroleum products. Hanoi has already gone to considerable lengths to reduce the vulnerability of its bulk petroleum storage centers by dispersal and other passive defense measures, including burying tanks, so that an emergency plan for an alternative system of supply undoubtedly exists. To the extent that off-loading and improvised storage cannot be fully realized at Haiphong, the logical alternative system would be based on China's Fort Bayard and port facilities and its connecting rail links.

The immediate impact in North Vietnam will be felt, therefore, in the need to convert to a new system of supply and distribution. This conversion will necessitate costly measures and create significant problems in adapting to a new situation. If a petroleum shortage develops its burden will fall on less essential or nonessential and civilian uses, which may comprise as much as one-third of normal consumption.

We estimate, nevertheless, that the supply of petroleum for the essential military and economic functions will continue, and that the flow of supplies to the insurgent forces in South Vietnam can be sustained if not increased.

Even before the attacks on the bulk petroleum storage facilities the bombings were causing increasing disruption of economic activity. After adjustments have been made to operate a makeshift supply and distribution system for petroleum the continuation of attacks on transportation will cause further disruption. Hanoi will have to reallocate capital and additional labor for repair and construction within the transport sector at the expense of industry and agriculture.

The cumulative debilitating effects of the bombing had already slowed down growth in industry and agriculture during 1965. There will probably be no growth in industry and agriculture during 1966 and the first 6 months of 1967, and some plans for economic development including new industrial construction projects will probably have to be abandoned. The stagnation of industrial growth

will have no overriding effect on the waging of a war which, for other than manpower, is essentially sustained by material inputs from outside North Vietnam. North Vietnam's modern industrial economy makes almost no direct or significant contribution to the war effort. The stagnation of agricultural growth may, however, create problems particularly if the 10th month harvest is poor. Even so the primarily agrarian nature of this subsistence economy means that there will be no sustained or critical hardship among the bulk of the population as a consequence of the effect of the air war at its present levels.

b. Military

Air attacks on military targets in North Vietnam to mid-1967 if maintained at the scale and of the same nature as that of the first part of 1966 will not impair the military capability of North Vietnam. The military targets being attacked in the present air war are not those that would have a highly disruptive effect on the military establishment or significantly impair its training, and defense capabilities or its capability to support the insurgency in South Vietnam.

3. Effects of an Expanded Air Offensive

The effectiveness of air attacks in creating burdensome pressures and strains on North Vietnam would be greatly enhanced by an expanded bombing program that included intensive 24-hour interdiction against the road and rail connections to Communist China and neutralization of the many significant military/economic targets such as the remaining petroleum storage facilities and the Haiphong cement plant.

Such a program could cause an overloading of the main transport connections to China and create severe internal distribution problems.* Although expanded air attacks would not stop activities essential to support of the war, they could cause a drastic decline in the level and efficiency with which the economic and military sectors function.

*See Appendix A for a more detailed discussion of the transportation problems resulting from this postulated attack.

4. The Logistics Target System

The Rolling Thunder attack against lines of communication, bridges and transportation equipment targets has resulted in losses to North Vietnam of over \$30 million or over three-fourths of the estimated direct damage inflicted on all economic targets. Forty six bridges or 20 percent of the bridges on the rail lines subjected to air attacks have been damaged or destroyed, and 212 highway bridges have been destroyed or damaged. In spite of the continued and increasing armed reconnaissance attacks on the five major railroad lines, on only two--Hanoi to Vinh and Hanoi to Lao Cai--has through rail service been effectively interdicted for most of the time since the bombings began. The Hanoi - Dong Dang line has been interdicted for through service several times but for a total of only a few months. The Hanoi-Haiphong line has been interdicted for a total of only a few weeks. The Hanoi - Thai Nguyen line has been able to maintain through traffic almost constantly.

Losses of transportation equipment, particularly motor trucks, have increased sharply in recent months. According to pilot reports over 2,000 trucks have been damaged or destroyed. These pilot reports undoubtedly overstate actual results but even without adjustment, reports indicating this level of destruction would amount to only two-thirds of the trucks known to have been imported by North Vietnam in 1965.

The North Vietnamese responded to these attacks with a crash construction effort to implement a pre-strike planning program designed to keep lines of communication open to develop more sophisticated methods of concealment for roads, bridges and ferries, and to complete an impressive proliferation of bridge bypasses and alternate routes. By the end of 1965 an estimated 70-100,000 workers had been added to the labor force of construction work-camps engaged in rail and road repairs.

The success of these countermeasures is seen in statistics on the number of bridges destroyed or damaged and the repair measures adopted by North Vietnam to keep traffic moving. Of the total of 258 bridges damaged--46 rail or rail/highway bridges and 212 highway bridges--North Vietnam

has found it necessary to repair only 67 bridges--22 rail or rail/highway and 45 highway bridges. The major emphasis has been to construct temporary crossings or by-passes, over 173 of these having been constructed to replace damaged highway bridges. The savings resulting from these expedients are impressive. North Vietnam has had to expend only \$3 million on temporary repairs compared to a cost of over \$12 million if all the damaged or destroyed bridges were permanently repaired or reconstructed.

Although the air strikes have patently made it more difficult and costly to maintain traffic movement, the countermeasures adopted have proved extremely effective. Overall transport performance has been maintained at pre-bombing levels. The known movement of supplies into Laos and South Vietnam during the 1965-66 dry season was double that of the previous year.

After an initial shaky response to Allied bombings, the North Vietnamese were able to consolidate their position and are now able to maintain and improve their transportation system even though the bombings have increased. The ease with which they converted to a wartime construction base during 1965 indicates that further increases in air attacks would undoubtedly be countered by an expansion of existing capabilities to keep open all important routes to South Vietnam.

The level of interdiction carried on through June 1966 has been insufficient to create any major strains in the North Vietnamese transport system. If interdiction continues at current levels through mid-1967, the North Vietnamese should have no difficulty in maintaining current levels of traffic, including imports and exports by land.

Meaningful pressures on North Vietnamese transport capabilities would require an air attack program that denies the country its ability to maintain seaborne imports and exports, increases import requirements, and concentrates transport on the land connections to Communist China. Such an air attack program would have to include measures to close North Vietnam's major seaports, the neutralization of remaining petroleum storage facilities and vital economic targets such as the Haiphong cement plant, and a highly intensified program of armed reconnaissance against surface

transport and lines of communication linking North Vietnam and Communist China.

The two rail connections to China are currently used at only about one-third of their normal capacity. If measures against the major seaports could stop as much as 50 percent of normal import trade, these rail lines would be forced to operate at approximately full capacity under interdicted conditions. If more seaborne traffic had to be diverted to overland movement and additional import requirements were generated, by neutralization of the cement plant for example, the rail traffic requirement would increase even beyond the uninterdicted capacity of the rail lines.

Sustained interdiction of the lines would force the Communists to allocate considerable amounts of manpower and materials to maintain the railroad lines and alternate highway routes. Virtually all daylight traffic would stop and night traffic would be disrupted thus slowing down movement and making the logistic resupply of Communist forces considerably less reliable than at present.

Some economic requirements would have to go unsatisfied and many of the Bloc aid projects and domestic construction programs would have to be postponed. Modern industrial production would be slowed down and there would be increasing though not critical problems in food and distribution problems.

There would, of course, be adequate transport capacity to support the military establishment and to continue the present level of aggression in South Vietnam and Laos. But the support of these activities would be a much more costly and difficult burden. The population of North Vietnam would also be more keenly aware of the deprivations and costs associated with the war.

C. The State of Civilian Morale

1. General Review

The initial response of North Vietnam's civilian population to the US/GVN air attacks was characterized by a high degree of patriotic enthusiasm. The air attacks in large measure have been a strong force for unifying the population in its resistance to the "US aggressors." As the

air attacks have continued and intensified, there has been a waning of popular enthusiasm. This has not, however, reached the point that it has any meaningful impact upon the determination of the regime to continue with the war or the policy options it may elect to achieve its objectives.

Almost every segment of the civilian population of North Vietnam has been forced to make some sacrifice in its standard of living as the result of the bombing. However, civilians living in the southern part of the country--about 15 percent of the population--have suffered far greater hardships in the form of personal and property losses, shortages of consumer goods, and sharp declines in income resulting from interruption of normal economic activity.

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Data released by the Ministry of Labor in the spring of 1966 on the excessive rates of absenteeism among construction workers in the southern provinces may reflect the poor state of morale there. Absenteeism due to illness among construction workers largely engaged in repair work on the transportation system in the southern part of the country averaged 16.3 days per worker in 1965 or 5 percent of total working days scheduled.

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Elsewhere, the hardships caused by evacuation from urban centers, splitting of families, reductions in quality of consumer goods and services, increases in work hours largely without additional compensation, and losses of income resulting from transfers from normal jobs to lower paying defense-related tasks are less severe but apparently have depressed civilian morale to some extent. There is little explicit evidence available on the morale of civilians living outside of target areas. A March 1966 Hanoi press report stated that a decline in the health and morale of workers at the country's second largest machinery plant--the Tran Hung Dao Machinery and Tool Plant in Hanoi, which produces items for military as well as civilian use--

had occurred due to the increase in regular working time and in outside duties.

Nevertheless, recent public discussion of the need to tighten control over both party members and the general population implies that the regime fears there may be some deterioration of public morale. An article in the March 1966 issue of the party journal Hoc Tap, detailed weaknesses in the party's techniques for disciplining erring members, and in April 1966, Ho Chi Minh called for "harsh disciplinary measures" against a number of party members and cadres in party cells who failed to carry out party policies correctly. Less than two weeks later the chairman of the Supreme Peoples Organ of Control in the government called for a revision of the sections of the legal code dealing with counterrevolutionary activities, protection of state property, and the rights and duties of citizens "in order to satisfy the demands of wartime."

This recent emphasis upon breakdowns of discipline implies that patriotic appeals alone are no longer sufficient to maintain civilian enthusiasm for the war. The original strength of appeals to the patriots was evident from the response of over 3 million youths (ages 16-30) and 1.7 million women, or about 50 percent of the working age population, to give active support for the war effort by performing various essential economic and paramilitary tasks under the "three readies"* and "three responsibilities"** movements.

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The continuation of bombing appears, however, to be gradually intensifying economic and political problems to the point that the patriotic fervor with which the population initially greeted the air strikes is being diminished.

*The "three readies" for youth are: (1) ready to fight; (2) ready to join the army; (3) ready to go wherever the country requires them.

**The "three responsibilities" for women are: (1) responsibility to produce and do other tasks to free the men to fight; (2) responsibility to take over family affairs and to encourage their husbands and sons to serve in combat; (3) responsibility to serve in battle if necessary.

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Discussions of civilian mobilization in North Vietnamese publications during 1966 indicate that the regime is encountering difficulties in effectively employing those already mobilized. These difficulties are largely blamed on the lower level cadres in both the government and the party, who are said to discriminate against young people in general and women in particular in the assessment of responsibilities. The morale-depressing effects of prejudice and discrimination in the mobilization effort is compounded by the sheer inability of North Vietnam's cadre force to manage the task. Managerial inefficiencies have proliferated since air strikes began in February 1965, and have prevented an orderly reallocation of the labor force. Cadres have been criticized in the North Vietnamese press for mobilizing construction workers and starting projects without plan.

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In an effort to stimulate patriotic fervor the regime's propaganda makes clear the direct connection between North Vietnamese support for the war in the South and the bombing of North Vietnam.

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Despite the regime's propaganda on the success of the "liberation forces" in the south, the population in North Vietnam is probably increasingly aware that the war is not going well and that heavy casualties are being suffered by North Vietnamese troops who have been sent south.

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If these casualties mount and the morale of the North Vietnamese troops in South Vietnam drops seriously, there is likely to be a comparable drop in the morale of the civilian population.

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2. Prospects

Civilian morale is likely to continue to decline in North Vietnam over the next 12 months because of the probability of further declines in civilian living standards. Agricultural difficulties--resulting at least in part from the mobilization effort--have already affected the current harvest, intensifying the already tight food situation in North Vietnam. Pham Hung, a member of the party politburo and director of the Financial and Trade Bureau of the Premier's Office stated in May 1966 that prices of food on the free market have already started to rise because of setbacks in the spring harvest and that "some...comrades...doubt it will be possible to stabilize the situation in the forthcoming period." In addition to the pressure on food supplies, other strains on civilian living standards will probably increase. Despite the possibility of a further decline in civilian morale during the next year, such an eventuality is not likely in the foreseeable future to deprive the leadership of freedom to pursue the conflict in whatever manner it chooses.

II. The Significance of Laos and Cambodia

The ability of the Communists to launch and to sustain the insurgency movement in North Vietnam has been greatly facilitated by the essentially free access they have had to those areas in Laos and Cambodia which border South Vietnam. Laos has developed as the major route for the infiltration of men and supplies into South Vietnam. Cambodia, which has been used to a limited extent as a source of supplies and has served principally as a safe-haven for Communist forces, is becoming increasingly important as an integral part of the logistics system. The unique value to the Communists of both countries lies in their neutral status. The logistic resupply activities in Laos are hindered only by aerial interdiction and such ground activities as have been conducted to date. Both of these measures have had only a limited effectiveness. Cambodia, on the other hand, provides the Communists an almost complete immunity from US/GVN and allied military reaction. The opportunities to apply political or economic pressures to induce a Cambodia reaction against Communist use of its territory are also extremely limited.

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A. Laos

1. Supply Requirements and Road Capacity

The Communists have been able to use three routes to supply their forces in South Vietnam--the sea route from North Vietnam (or China), the Laotian land route, and the Cambodian route.* Although the use of any particular route has varied over time, the overwhelming share of supplies needed to meet the external logistic requirements of the Communist forces in South Vietnam are being moved by truck from North Vietnam through the Laotian Panhandle.

The increasing use of the Laotian supply route is shown graphically in Figure I-2 which compares the movement of supplies by truck into the southern panhandle during the 1965 and 1966 dry season. During the 1965 dry season trucks carried an average of some 34 short tons of supplies a day into the infiltration corridor of Laos for a total resupply of over 6,000 tons. During the 1966 dry season, however, the daily movement of supplies into Southern Laos was about 84 tons or almost 17,000 tons during the season of which 15,100 were delivered to the infiltration corridor. In both years the flow of supplies was also supplemented by a small--2 tons a day--movement around the DMZ. Figure I-2 also shows the dramatic increase in the through movement of supplies to the borders of South Vietnam. Although the Communists had to increase the flow of supplies for their forces in the Panhandle they were at the same time able to increase the flow of supplies by truck to South Vietnam from at least 900 tons in 1965 to 7,350 tons thus far in 1966.

a. The Logistic Requirement

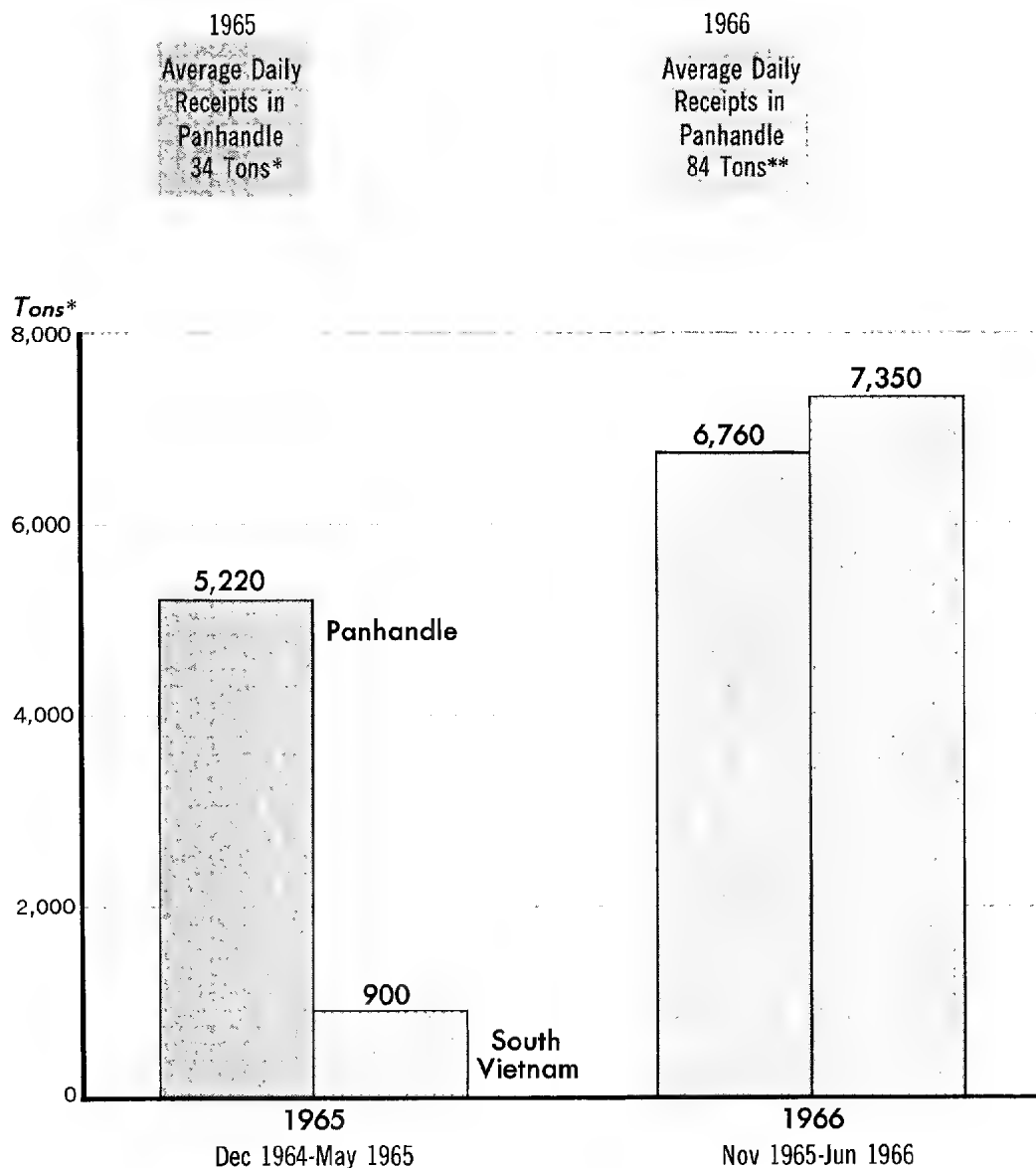
The estimated VC/NVA military strength in South Vietnam in mid-1966 was between 260,000 and 280,000 which includes an estimated 118,000 regular troops. These troops require approximately 150 tons of supplies daily

*The reference here is to supplies moved into South Vietnam from any point in Cambodia, and is not intended to refer to supplies that move on the Laotian route and merely cross northeast Cambodia before entering South Vietnam.

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Figure I-2

SUPPLIES TRUCKED FROM NORTH VIETNAM INTO THE LAOTIAN PANHANDLE DURING THE 1965 AND 1966 DRY SEASONS



* Short tons

**Deliveries into the Laotian infiltration corridor shown here reflect 20% less in transit due to pilferage, spoilage, and aerial interdiction. In addition to these deliveries, both Laos and South Vietnam received some supplies from Cambodia.

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at present levels of combat. Only a small part of this daily requirement--some 20 tons of Class II (weapons), Class IV (quartermaster, engineer, and medical) and Class V (ammunition) supplies--must be obtained from out of country. We have noted in recent months, however, that because of internal distribution problems within South Vietnam the Communist forces stationed in the food-deficit central highlands are obtaining rice supplies from Cambodia. The present estimates of the probable build-up of Communist forces and rates of combat by mid-1967 would, of course, increase these requirements substantially. The total daily requirement by mid-1967 could be in the order of 210 tons a day. The external requirement would then be 35 tons a day at present levels of combat or some 55 tons a day if the level of combat should double. These external supply requirements are small and their fulfillment requires the use of only a small percentage of the capacity of the supply routes through Laos.

b. Logistic Capacity

The capability to move supplies overland through North Vietnam and Laos to South Vietnam is restricted by the capacity of the roads in Laos. The current uninterdicted capacity of the infiltration network in the Laotian Panhandle for truck movement to points within a few miles of South Vietnam is about 400 tons a day in the dry season and 100 tons a day in the rainy season. Come rain or come shine this capacity ranges from 5-20 times the current external logistic requirement of the Communist forces in South Vietnam and from 2-7 times the probable external requirements under current estimates of the probable build-up of Communist forces by mid-1967.

The prospects are dim that conventional air interdiction can reduce the capacity of this network to a level that would represent an effective ceiling on the volume of supplies that can be moved through Laos. During the 30-day bombing pause from December 1965-January 1966 some 8,000 sorties dropped 16,000 tons of ordnance on the main supply routes in the Panhandle. In spite of this attack the level of truck traffic moving south during the same period--29 trucks per day--was twice the level of truck traffic in the same period one year

earlier. Similarly, a photographic analysis of 26 route segments interdicted during 1965 in MR IV in North Vietnam showed that route capacity was reduced on only nine segments. On only two of these segments was capacity reduced more than 25 percent.

In view of these assessments and the fact that the level of traffic moving on these routes is a small volume of military traffic using, on the average, only slightly over 20 percent of road capacity, the Laotian supply network must be regarded as relatively invulnerable to conventional air interdiction.

2. Maintenance and Improvement of the Route Through Laos

The difficulty in interdicting the supply network through Laos is compounded by the intensive efforts which the North Vietnamese have expended in camouflaging roads, in effecting rapid repairs, in resorting to night travel, and other innovations to keep traffic moving, and at the same time to improve and expand the original network. As shown in the map (Figure I-3) the infiltration network through Laos now consists of some 650 miles of roads compared with about 150 miles at the end of the 1964 dry season.

a. Road Construction

At the end of 1964 the truckable road network in Laos extended only as far south as Muong Nong. By the end of 1965 the network had advanced another 100 miles farther south. During the 1966 dry season a more intensive effort was put forth. The southward route was extended another 60 miles to the tri-border area and more than 100 miles of new roads were built in Laos and Cambodia to connect the infiltration network with the Cambodian road system. In addition, 130 miles of new alternate roads, including the alternates to Mu Gia Pass, were built in the northern part of the country. The details of the 1965-66 construction are shown in Figure I-4. The net effect of the expansion in 1966 has been to provide an alternate route for every road that existed prior to the end of 1964. Furthermore the main north-south network has improved to the extent that some through truck traffic

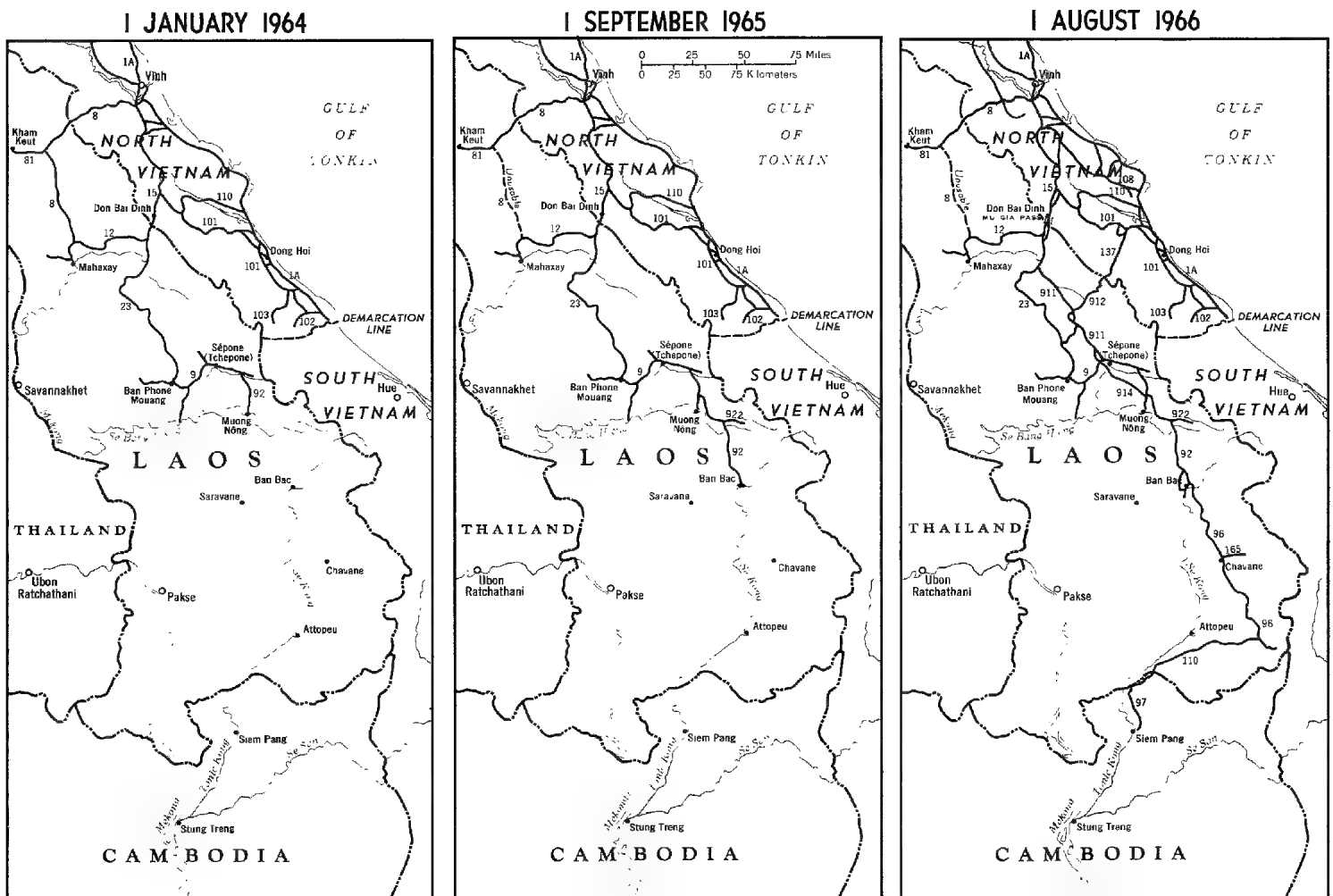


Figure I-4

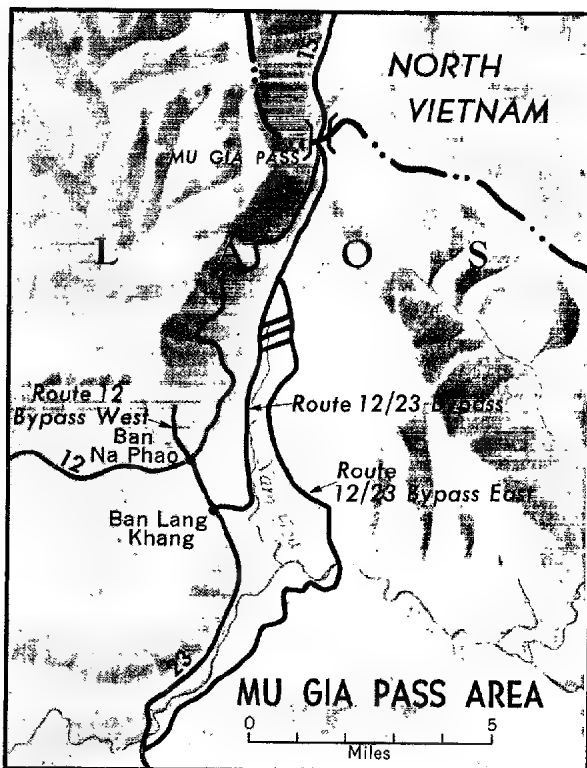
LAOS PANHANDLE

ROAD CAPACITIES AND DEVELOPMENT

- Communist roadnet mid-1965
- Communist roadnet developed since mid-1965 (Laos only, except for 137 and 97)
- Other road
- Communist controlled area

Road capacity in tons per day

Dry season [600/125] Rainy season



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apparently is moving for the first time during any rainy season.

b. Labor Utilization

In earlier years the supply movement through Laos was essentially jungle trails. In 1961, for example, some 2,000 men were required to operate the trail movement through Laos. The construction of an improved road system and the need to maintain it under conditions of air interdiction required substantial inputs of manpower.

The labor force engaged in building and maintaining roads in the Laos Panhandle has an estimated total strength of 20-25,000 laborers, comprised of Communist engineering troops supported by locally conscripted labor. The Panhandle is sparsely populated so that a large part of this labor force has been brought in from other parts of Laos or from countries adjacent to the Laos border including North Vietnam. We are unable to determine the number of North Vietnamese in this labor force. Available reports indicate that North Vietnamese labor does work on routes 23, 911 and 92 if not others.

The labor force on roads in Laos is organized into workcamps similar to those in North Vietnam. They are located along the entire road system and probably dispersed as follows:

<u>Location</u>	<u>No. of Camps</u>	<u>Estimated Strength</u>
Mu Gia Pass/Rte 23 (Including a rock quarry)	1	4,500
Route 911/912 (including a rock quarry)	3	9,000
Route 914/92	1	3,000
Route 96	1	3,000
Route 110	1	3,000
	Total	22,500

These workcamp organizations are responsible for designated segments of roads. The total strength of a workcamp will vary with the volume of work under way and the availability of local labor. Figure I-5 illustrates the rate at which these laborers have been able to complete road construction projects. The rapid expansion of the road net in 1965-1966 and increases in traffic have made a larger maintenance force necessary. Given the remarkable increase in the mileage of new motorable roads constructed in the past year, it is believed that the present labor force can maintain the road net and can expand the network even if the level of air strikes increases during 1966-67.

Some construction equipment is being used for road building in Laos and has contributed to the rapid completion of new roads. Aerial photography has shown unidentified pieces of construction equipment, probably bulldozers and roadgraders, at key routes under construction. It is believed that the inventory of construction equipment in the Laos Panhandle could be increased during 1966-67 if the level of interdiction by air strikes were increased.

c. Repair Activities

Workcamps in Laos have been as efficient in the repair of bomb-damaged roads and bridges as their counterparts in North Vietnam. They have been able to build a new timber bridge at Ban Nape on route 8

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the repairs have been carried out while the road system was in a stage of considerable expansion.

3. Vulnerability of the Laotian Route

The Communists in the Panhandle are better able to counteract the bombings now than they were a year ago. They apparently have the ability and resources to increase and improve countermeasures to air attack. Experience in Laos and in North Vietnam shows that conventional air interdiction is unlikely to create any significant or sustained reduction in the road capacity of the infiltration network in Laos, as long as the Communist forces require such a small volume of logistic support from North Vietnam.

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SCHEDULE OF ROAD CONSTRUCTION IN LAOS August 1965 - April 1966

Figure I-5

Route Number (Length) (Statute Miles)	1965 Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	1966 Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	Average Rate of Road Construction (Miles per day)
Mu Gia Bypass Net (17)										.23
911 (63)										.84
912 (61)										.51
914 (40)										.33
923/96 (123)										.68
165 East of Chavane (9)										.33
110 (119)										.99

The enormity of the task assigned to air interdiction is apparent in this example. We assume that the nature of the VC/NVA external logistic requirements remains essentially unchanged and that air interdiction has produced a sustained 25 percent reduction in the capacity of the supply network. Even under these assumptions conventional air interdiction could not effectively reduce resupply capabilities through Laos until the VC/NVA force structure reached a level of at least six times the build-up estimated by mid-1967 at current levels of combat, or until the mid-1967 force engaged in combat at a rate some ten times greater than that being waged in South Vietnam.

The most promising means of effectively reducing Communist resupply capabilities are by denying them access to supplies in South Vietnam, forcing them to engage in a greater level of combat and at the same time denying them access to the Cambodian and sea infiltration routes. During the past dry season we estimate that the Communist forces in the food-deficit central highlands may have been receiving as much as 15 tons of rice daily from Cambodia. If this source were denied and the rice had to be supplied from North Vietnam through Laos the logistic problem would become more difficult. It would not be critical at this time, but as the VC/NVA build-up continues the excess of route capacity over supply requirements would be reduced significantly.

B. Cambodia

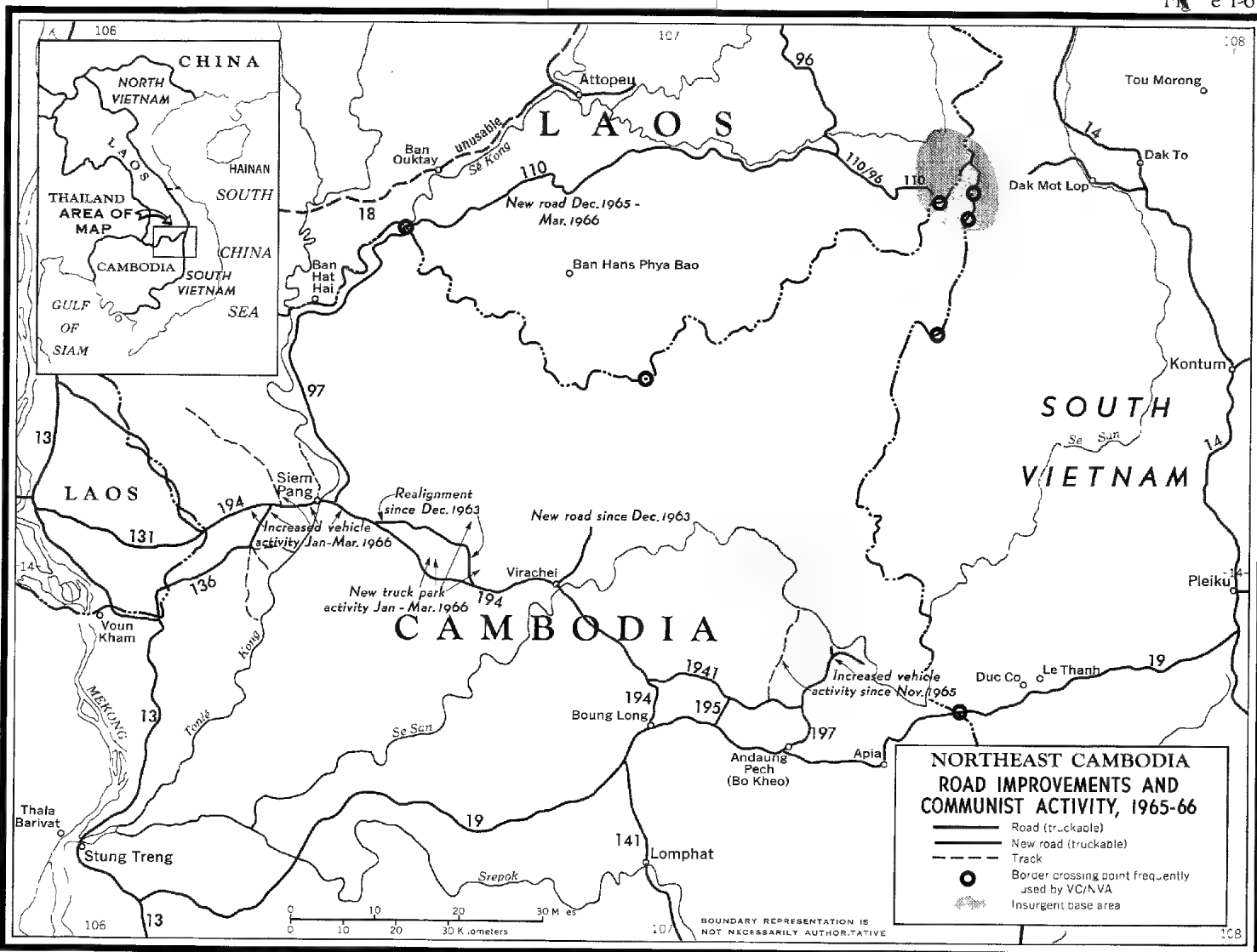
For years the Viet Cong have used Cambodia as a sanctuary and as a minor source of supplies. With the expansion of Communist activities and the introduction of NVA units into the conflict, even greater use is being made of Cambodia as a sanctuary area and as a source of supplies.

1. Sanctuary

The Viet Cong and, more recently, North Vietnamese forces use Cambodian territory in many areas along the 600-mile border for sanctuary and bivouac purposes. Important Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army military facilities, such as rest camps, training areas, hospitals, workshops, and storage depots, now operate in Cambodia. Photography shows at least two Communist base areas in northeast Cambodia. (See the map, Figure I-6)

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File 1-6



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Cambodia will loom even larger in Communist planning as the war intensifies in South Vietnam.

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the principal use of Cambodian territory, at least in the Tay Ninh - Svay Rieng area, is to harbor rest and recovery camps for Viet Cong wounded.

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2. Cambodia as a Source of Supplies

Most of the supplies procured by the Communists in Cambodia have been purchased in the open market in small amounts and moved clandestinely across the border by primitive transport. In the past year, however, the volume of supplies moved to the Communists has definitely increased. Recent reporting, including captured documents, indicate that the VC are acquiring in Cambodia substantial quantities of cloth, pharmaceuticals, surgical supplies, salt, fish, gasoline, communications equipment, and office supplies. Sihanouk has also made so called "humanitarian" gifts of medicine and food to the Viet Cong. We estimate that at least 5,000 tons of rice and probably as much as 10,000 tons have been sold to the Communists. A frequently reported figure of 20,000 tons appears to be possible. During late 1965 and early 1966 Cambodian traders reportedly moved substantial amounts of rice northward on the Mekong River to Cambodian towns of Kratie and Stung Treng. The rice was then moved onward by small water craft or by truck to the South Vietnamese and Laotian borders.

truck convoys carrying rice also crossed the border four or five miles into Vietnamese territory after nightfall. The Viet Cong control the border on four routes that enter Tay Ninh and Binh Long Provinces. The purchase of rice in Cambodia probably is a logistic expedient to supply VC/NVA units operating in rice deficit areas, instead of attempting to move the rice from surplus areas within South Vietnam.

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The use of Cambodia as a transfer area or as a source of arms and ammunition is difficult to assess.

Almost certainly, the Communists have established arms caches on Cambodian territory for support of the VC and NVA forces. Cambodian troops may occasionally have provided arms to the VC, but such incidents have not been widespread and apparently have not involved collusion or foreknowledge on the part of the Cambodian government.

Arms shipments probably have also moved south from Laos through northeastern Cambodia into South Vietnam. Developments in the fair-weather road network during the past dry season strongly suggest that the route was intended to support such traffic during the dry season (See the map). This traffic could have moved with permission of the local Cambodian authorities but without the knowledge of the officials in Phnom Penh.

Even without the cooperation of the Cambodian government the Communists could make greater use of Cambodian territory. They could expand the current type of small-scale infiltration by sending more people to purchase supplies in the open market and by making more use of legitimate import houses and the Communist apparatus in Phnom Penh. Instead of moving these supplies across the border by clandestine means, they can hire trucks to move supplies to the border in the same manner that some shipments of food have already been made.

Cambodia, accordingly, must be regarded as a definite asset to the Communist forces both as a sanctuary and as a major route for obtaining food and other supplies.

APPENDIX A

RECUPERABILITY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM IN
NORTH VIETNAM

"In the task of ensuring communications, we scored many good achievements and gained much good experience in 1965. In the years to come, to develop past successes we must increase reserve projects, means of production, tools and equipment, and rationally organize the manpower necessary to repair and restore bridges and roads rapidly so as to ensure continuous transport."

Nguyen Con, Chairman, State
Planning Committee, to the
National Assembly of North
Vietnam - 27 April 1966

I. Effects of the Rolling Thunder ProgramA. Overall

As of mid-year 1966 direct losses caused by air strikes against the transportation system in North Vietnam amounted to over \$30 million or over three-fourths of the estimated cost of replacement of all economic facilities damaged by the Rolling Thunder program. The air attacks have accounted for the damage or destruction of 46 rail and rail/highway bridges and 212 highway bridges. Losses of transport equipment were as follows*:

	<u>Destroyed</u>	<u>Damaged</u>
Vessels	1,700	2,800
Vehicles	800	950
Railroad Freight Cars	570	825
Locomotives	8	6

*These figures are basically those obtained from pilot reports but adjusted downward on the basis of photography and analysis of bomb damage assessments of individual strikes in an effort to eliminate both exaggeration and duplication.

In addition to these losses, damage and disruption to the transport system has resulted from interdiction strikes against road systems and from attacks on railroad yards at Vinh, Yen Bai, Thai Nguyen, and Nam Dinh. Both the amount of time and cost of repairing the damage resulting from these strikes has been negligible.

The air strikes to date have concentrated primarily on transportation targets in the southern part of North Vietnam. The most significant strikes, however, have been against transport routes in the northern and central parts of North Vietnam. The interdiction program has produced relatively uneven results in attaining its objective of halting rail traffic.

Only one rail line--Hanoi to Thai Nguyen--has been open for through traffic almost continuously since the air strikes began. The Hanoi to Vinh line has been effectively interdicted for through rail service for most of the period. Through rail service on the Hanoi - Lao Cai line, which carried an estimated 30 percent of total rail traffic in 1964, has been halted during most of the period since mid-July 1965. Interdiction of this line disrupted the export of apatite and stopped the movement of Chinese transit traffic to and from Yunnan Province.

The important Hanoi - Dong Dang and Hanoi-Haiphong lines which carry the bulk of North Vietnam's imports have been subjected to the least amount of bombing. They are also the two lines transiting territory which provides more alternatives for bypasses and other expedients to maintain traffic movement. The Hanoi - Dong Dang line has been interdicted for through service for a total of only a few months. The Hanoi-Haiphong has been interdicted for a total of only a few weeks. Successful interdiction of the Hanoi - Dong Dang line would have particularly important and measurable effects. When the line came under heavy attack in late 1965 the import of Chinese coal was shifted from rail to sea transport. The coal movement was shifted back to rail transportation in March 1966 but was noted to be again moving by sea in May when the rail line was again interdicted for through traffic.

B. Damage to Bridges

The status of the bridges damaged or destroyed by air attack is shown in the following tabulation:

	<u>Rail and Rail/Highway Bridges</u>	<u>Highway Bridges</u>	<u>Total</u>
Damaged or Destroyed	46	212	258
Repaired	22	45	67
To Be Repaired	24	167	191

The North Vietnamese have found it necessary to repair slightly over 25 percent of the bridges damaged or destroyed. Rather than effect costly and probably short lived repairs they have chosen to concentrate on the construction of alternate bypasses such as fords, ferries and temporary bridges. A total of 173 alternate crossings have been confirmed [redacted] These alternate crossings have been used particularly to sustain highway transport. The net effect is that North Vietnam now has more highway crossings than it had before the start of the bombings.

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The use of temporary expedients to ensure continuous transport is particularly attractive to the North Vietnamese not only because the expedients are generally less vulnerable to air attack but also because they can be implemented at far less cost. The permanent repair or reconstruction of the bridges attacked to date would cost North Vietnam an estimated \$12.2 million. The cost of temporary repairs and other expedients to maintain traffic, however, has been only \$2.9 million.

II. Countermeasures to Air Attack

A. Repair of Bridges

As indicated above, one of the major responses of the North Vietnamese to the air attack on their transportation has been to use temporary expedients to keep traffic moving. The following survey of the damage or destruction of bridges on the principal rail lines illustrates this point in detail.

Hanoi to Vinh

This line is approximately 170 nautical miles (nm) in length and includes 26 major bridges (over 90 feet in length) and 48 minor bridges (less than 90 feet long). Eleven of the 26 major bridges have been damaged by air strikes. Seven of these have an operational bypass bridge or one under construction. Four have no bridge bypass, but in all cases there is evidence of some means of crossing such as foot bridges, pontoon bridges, or ferry crossing.

Although 15 bridges have not been damaged, three of them have bypass bridges already under construction; a reflection of North Vietnam's widespread pre-strike planning.

Vinh to Xom Khe

On this stretch of line, which is approximately 52 nm long, 6 major and 4 minor bridges have been damaged or destroyed. Fifty percent have evidence of bypass efforts in addition to attempts at repair of the original bridge.

The North Vietnamese have demonstrated considerable ingenuity and expertise in keeping traffic moving on this line and there is little or no indication that these capabilities have diminished appreciably.

Hanoi to Dong Dang

The line from Hanoi to the Chinese border is approximately 86 nautical miles in length. There are 25 bridges 50 feet and over in length. Ten of these bridges may be considered as major structures.

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At least three major bridges on this line have been damaged by U. S. air strikes. Repairs to these bridges are being carried out with modern equipment; the new substructures are massive and the repairs appear to be of a permanent nature. The nature of these repairs and the installation of dual gauge track in certain locations give every indication that the North Vietnamese hope to keep this line open under all conditions.

Hanoi to Haiphong

This line, the most important for the movement of imported economic goods, is approximately 52 miles in length. Two bridges have been damaged by air attack.

Bypass activity includes a new temporary bridge which is assumed to be operational, as well as an existing ferry crossing in the immediate vicinity. Repairs to the damaged original bridges are in evidence, though lack of photography precludes a determination of the pace of repair.

Hanoi to Lao Cai

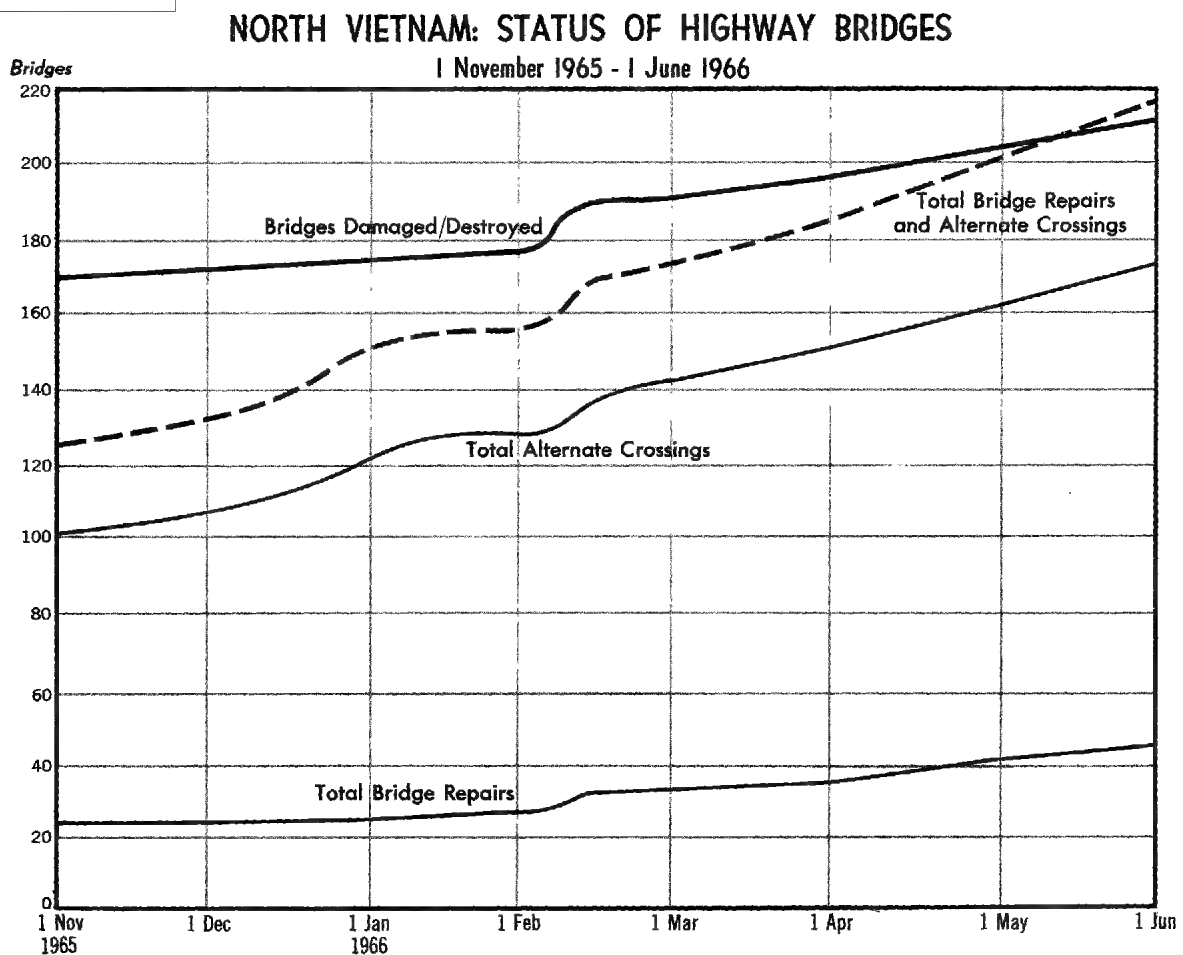
The line from Hanoi to the Chinese border is approximately 156 nautical miles in length and has 45 major and 29 minor bridges. [redacted] the damage or destruction of 4 major and 9 minor bridges above Yen Bai and 25X1 in rough terrain along the Red River. The Viet Tri bridge, located south of Yen Bai, was destroyed late in June of this year. The rugged nature of the terrain and the constrictive nature of the road bed has forced the North Vietnamese to repair the damaged structures rather than resort to bypasses. Only two bypasses are discernible in available photography.

Highway Bridges

Damage or destruction of a highway bridge in North Vietnam does not present the complications associated with such an act in more industrialized countries. This is borne out by a graphic review of the status of damaged highway bridges since November 1965.

Figure I-7 shows the cumulative totals of bridges of all types which have been destroyed or damaged plotted against the total number of bridges in need of repair at any given time. The difference between the two lines is the total number of bridges repaired. During the bombing pause from 24 December 1965 to 30 January 1966 the number of bridges repaired is seen to be appreciable. The difference since that period generally remains the same. The costs to repair or reconstruct the damaged bridges is shown in two categories--the cost of permanent repair and cost of temporary repairs that were made to keep traffic moving around all damaged structures. The decreasing trend shown for the cost of temporary repairs reflects the increased use of alternate methods of bypassing a given vulnerable crossing. This is more clearly shown in Figure I-8.

Figure I-8



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CLASSIFIED
EXCLUDED FROM AUTOMATIC DOWNGRADING
AND DECLASSIFICATION

Figure I-8 presents the status of the highway bridges only. The total of highway bridges damaged or destroyed is plotted against the total of bridges actually repaired, the number of alternate crossings, and the number of crossings to which no repairs have been made and no alternate means of transportation have been provided. To further clarify repairs and alternate crossings this is divided into total bridge repairs and total alternate crossings.

The total of bridges repaired (45) is around one-fourth of the total number (173) of new alternate crossings. The total of these two categories now exceeds the total of 212 highway bridges which were damaged or destroyed. As of 1 June, fords accounted for 65 percent of all alternate crossings with bypass bridges, ferries, foot bridges and pontoon bridges ranking in descending order. The largest number of bridges destroyed have been at crossings which have shallow streams, at least during the dry season. The longer and more important bridges are at locations requiring other than crossings by fords. At these more important crossings, more than one type of temporary crossing is usually in evidence.

In sum, the North Vietnamese are presently in a better position to keep their lines of highway transportation open, by having developed a high degree of skill in repairing damaged structures and in building more alternate crossings in order to increase the options available for the routing of highway traffic.

B. Improvement of Rail Lines

As the air strikes extended into the northern part of North Vietnam, the Hanoi regime undertook more permanent measures to ensure the operation of the vital Hanoi - Dong Dang line, and the connecting lines to Haiphong and Thai Nguyen.

Construction is under way to provide greater flexibility and limit the effectiveness of attempts to interdict these lines. A third rail is being laid along the Hanoi - Dong Dang line at least between the Chinese border and Kep, and possibly all the way to Hanoi. When this work is completed, probably within the next few months to Kep, both standard-gauge and meter-gauge rolling stock can be used on the line. As noted above several rail bypasses to bridges and at least one bypass around the city of Lang Son have been constructed or are currently under construction. In

addition, a standard-gauge rail line is under construction between Kep and the iron and steel complex at Thai Nguyen. Completion of the Kep - Thai Nguyen line, probably by the end of 1966, will provide the North Vietnamese with an alternate rail supply route in case of interdiction of the Hanoi - Dong Dang line between Kep and the Hanoi area, and will also permit the use of standard-gauge equipment for the movement of coke and coal from China to Thai Nguyen. If the line is interdicted between Kep and Dong Dang, the North Vietnamese can use rail shuttle service between bombed bridges in addition to shifting much of the volume of supplies to sea transportation.

Rail shuttle service also has been noted on the Hanoi-Haiphong line when the Hai Duong bridge is interdicted. Both a highway bypass bridge and a railroad bypass bridge have been constructed to circumvent the Hai Duong bridge in case of interdiction. Both of these bridges have spans that can be detached during the day and floated into place for use at night. Large barges with rails across them are being used as bridge spans for the rail bypass bridge. In addition, there are several waterways connecting Haiphong with Hanoi and other major cities which have a total capacity in excess of the capacity of the railroad.

C. New Road Construction and Improvement

The North Vietnamese have mounted a major effort to keep the road system functioning, particularly the vital links in Military Region IV (MR IV) which carry supplies to the Communist forces in Laos and South Vietnam. Since the beginning of the allied bombing over 200 miles of roads have been constructed and over 300 miles have been improved. At the present time about 60 miles of new roads are under construction.

The emphasis on new road construction is to provide a new inland route south from Thanh Hoa to Dong Hoi in MR IV. This new route, to be completed by the fall of 1966, will provide an alternate to the heavily interdicted coastal route. The new route follows terrain which avoids stream crossings and possible chokepoints. The development of this new route and the improvement of existing routes are providing the Vietnamese with an increased flexibility and capacity for the movement of supplies southward which is becoming increasingly difficult to overcome by bombing methods.

D. Use of Labor, Materials and Equipment

By the end of 1965, the North Vietnamese had developed its workcamp organization into a viable system with an estimated 70-100,000 workers. The air strikes which started in February 1965 concentrated first upon Military Region IV which has its headquarters at Vinh. The initial North Vietnamese response to the air attacks seemed confused and disorganized. This state of affairs apparently lasted for only a relatively short period because the level of traffic flow at that time was only slightly diminished. Before the year was out the level of traffic in MR IV had reached new highs.

The labor force of construction workcamps in MR IV in early 1965 totaled about 5,000 men of varying degrees of roadbuilding experience. Workcamps from northeast and northwest North Vietnam were transferred to the Vinh area during April and May. Common laborers and youth from Hanoi and Haiphong also were sent south to Vinh in June-July and as many as 60,000 youth may have been added to the workcamp force. The original workers who had some skill became the nucleus for teaching the inexperienced labor on the job. In addition, a small share of the labor force was sent to local training classes and to Communist China to learn the operation, maintenance and repair of construction equipment.

These workcamps implemented the contingency plans set up in Hanoi by stationing units at chokepoints, shifting labor to heavily bombed areas, procuring building materials and setting up motor pools for construction equipment.

As a result of this pre-strike planning the North Vietnamese are now better able to counteract the air strikes than they were a year ago. They have the ability and resources to increase and improve the countermeasures still further. The chokepoints are less critical now because alternate routes and crossings have been constructed. Moreover, the labor force has gained a great deal of experience in making quick repairs, using camouflage and carrying out other innovations to deceive the enemy.

The major share of repair work is carried out by simple repair methods and with basic building materials, primarily timber and rock products that are at present in adequate supply. There are an estimated 6 rock quarries in MR IV near key routes such as 1A, 15 and 7 that supply rock

products for repair and roadbuilding projects. Bamboo, the universal building material of southeast Asia, is used extensively in construction of temporary highway bridges. Two saw mills in western Nghe An Province provide large dimension timber for repairs to railroad bridges. The North Vietnamese recently have also purchased large dimension timber from Cambodia, which indicates a possible shortage of larger sizes. Although the North Vietnamese use all salvageable components at a damaged bridge, shortages of timber in 1966-67 might necessitate shipment of steel bridge girders from the north, particularly from the assembly area at the Thai Nguyen Iron and Steel Combine or Communist China.

The inventory of construction equipment used by the workcamps has increased since the start of the bombings and continued negotiations by the North Vietnamese with other Communist countries undoubtedly will provide additional units during 1966-67. The estimated inventory of construction equipment in use for road construction and bridge repair in MR IV consists of the following:

<u>Type</u>	<u>January 1965</u>	<u>June 1966</u>
Bulldozers	30	65
Mobile Cranes	25	35
Scrapers	5	20
Road Graders	20	30

Although the USSR and other Communist countries have supplied many dump trucks to North Vietnam for aid projects, it is not known how many have been earmarked for use in construction work in MR IV.

The experience gained by North Vietnamese in expanding the road network and in building alternate as well as additional stream crossings has given them greater expertise and speed in the repair of bomb-damaged structures and roads. As more labor and equipment is made available to the workcamps, even greater speed will be achieved in completing repairs. A selective listing of the speed with which these measures are completed is shown in Table I-3. The listing reflects activity in MR IV and cannot be considered representative of the more extensive repair work that has been observed on the rail bridges farther north.

Table I-3

North Vietnam
Selected Recuperation Times on Repair Work in Military Region IV

<u>Location</u>	<u>Time</u>
Bridge and Ferry on Route 1A (unlocated) Same work site	10.5 hours (for small vehicles) 30.5 hours (for large vehicles)
Cau Giat Bridge (1915N/10540E)	2 days (for 8-ton vehicles)
Route 15, km 262-266	29 hours
Dia Loi Ferry (1816N/10540E)	21 hours
Route 15 at Dia Loi Build ford and fill craters in road	7 days
Loc Yen Bridge (1810N/10542E)	24 hours
Khe Thoi Ford (unlocated)	30 hours
Muong Sen Ferry (1924N/10408E)	48 hours
Khe Quyen Bridge (unlocated)	48 hours
Hanoi-Vinh Rail line at Dien Chau Repair track at km 300	12 hours
Hiem Bridge (unlocated) Repaired 3 damaged spans Route 15 segment	30 hours 8 hours

E. Possible Innovations in 1966-67

The main effort by the North Vietnamese in 1966-67 will be to further improve the lines of communications within the Rolling Thunder target zone and additional pre-strike preparations in the Hanoi-Haiphong sanctuary area in anticipation of air strikes against communications in this zone. Additional alternate routes and stream crossings will probably be completed and greater effort made to camouflage them. The Chinese engineer units northeast of Hanoi will continue to maintain the Dong Dang rail line, thereby allowing greater Vietnamese flexibility in allocating resources to maintain lines of communications in other areas. More innovations can be expected in bridge repair methods to speed up restoration, particularly construction of more pontoon bridges, ferries, and fords.

If the rate of air strikes against the logistics targets system were doubled the North Vietnamese would probably be able to cope with the additional damage by increasing the labor force working on lines of communications by 40,000-50,000 persons. The additions to the labor force need not be greater because of the large amount of work already done in expanding the road system and building bypasses and other temporary crossings. The main thrust of future labor efforts will be in maintenance and repair of this expanded road system. The North Vietnamese have made an impressive demonstration of their proficiency in the speedy repair of interdicted roads.

III. Effect of Air Attacks on Traffic Movements

A. Through June 1966

Interdiction of the transportation network at the levels carried out through mid-1966 has not succeeded in reducing the traffic carried by the North Vietnamese transportation system. Unless there is a substantial increase in the level of interdiction, the North Vietnamese should have no serious difficulty in maintaining both the volume of imports and exports carried by land transport in 1965 and in sustaining the total transport performance of all modes of transportation. The estimated volume of imports and exports moved by rail on the Hanoi - Dong Dang line in 1965 was about 30 percent greater than that carried in 1964. This increase created no additional problems for the rail system because of the loss of Chinese transit traffic during the last half of the year. Total transport performance in 1965 by all modes of

transportation in terms of tons carried increased by about 5 percent above the 1964 level. Total tons carried during the first half of 1966 are estimated to have continued to increase slightly. (See Table I-4). The slight decreases in railroad performance were more than compensated by increases in highway, inland water, and coastal water performance. Total performance in terms of ton-miles, however, is estimated to have decreased slightly in 1965 and in the first half of 1966.

Table I-4

NORTH VIETNAM

Transport Performance, 1964-1965, and First Half 1966

	<u>1964</u>	<u>1965</u>	<u>Jan - June 1966</u>
Total Performance:			
Million tons carried	20.6	21.7	11.0
Million ton-miles	1,200	1,160	550
International Trade by Rail:			
Imports (thousand tons carried)	180	350	N. A.
Exports (thousand tons carried)	220	170	N. A.

The most serious problem for the North Vietnamese in maintaining the 1965 level of transport performance during July 1966 - June 1967, assuming the current level of air attacks and choice of targets, is the possibility of more frequent interdiction of the Hanoi - Dong Dang and Hanoi-Haiphong rail lines.

More frequent interdiction of these lines would disrupt the normal flow of through traffic from China but we estimate that the interdiction would not reduce the capacity of the lines below the levels needed to handle the normal volume of military and civilian supplies imported over the rail connections to China.

B. Intensive Interdiction of Transportation

A significant escalation of the air attacks against North Vietnam could have more meaningful results. To illustrate this we assume an escalated program of air attacks that results in the continued interdiction of all major rail, highway, and combination rail/highway bridges, including bypass bridges, throughout North Vietnam. Port facilities at Haiphong, Cam Pha, and Hon Gai, the major railroad repair shop at Gia Lam, and all major railroad yards are also assumed to be subjected to effective and repeated air attacks. Significant military and economic targets such as the remaining petroleum storage facilities and the Haiphong cement plant are also taken under attack.

The postulated attack would present North Vietnam with an immediate and severe problem in maintaining normal traffic movements, particularly the vital import traffic.

Sustained interdiction of the lines of communication would force the Communists to allocate considerable amounts of manpower and materials to maintain the railroad lines and alternate routes. Intensive armed reconnaissance would stop all daylight traffic and disrupt night traffic, thus slowing down movement and making the logistic resupply of Communist forces considerably less reliable than at present.

In order to maintain imports normally carried by ocean-going ships the North Vietnamese would have several alternatives. These include the diversion of seaborne trade to South China ports and using land transport routes or coastal shipping to move cargoes to and from North Vietnam; the use of small watercraft to load and unload ocean-going

ships while they are anchored outside North Vietnam ports; and the use of other minor ports in North Vietnam.

If only one-half of the normal traffic through Haiphong could be handled by lighters and other craft once the port is closed and watercraft are subject to 24-hour armed reconnaissance, the other half would probably move through China by rail to North Vietnam. In this case 800 tons* per day of general cargo imports and up to 400 or 500 tons per day of petroleum imports would be transferred to rail transport. Railroad connections to Communist China are currently operating at only about one-third capacity. This added traffic would compel North Vietnam and China to divert some overland traffic via Yunnan Province and the Hanoi - Lao Cai line. Both lines would then be forced to attempt to operate at full capacity under interdicted conditions. If production in the cement plant were also halted at the same time, an additional import requirement for cement, probably as high as 1,700 tons a day would be generated. This additional tonnage would raise traffic far beyond the uninterdicted capacity of the Hanoi - Dong Dang rail line, the principal import route. The overburdening of the rail lines would become more acute if even less traffic could be handled by lightering and/or coastwise movement.

The North Vietnamese would probably be forced to make greater use of highway and inland water traffic. Although it is extremely difficult to interdict these systems, their greater use would increase the opportunities for harassment of actual traffic movement. The roads from China are estimated to have a limited capacity in the rainy season of about 1,000 tons EWPD. In the area north of Hanoi the height of the rainy season occurs during July through September. A sustained high level of interdiction during this period would be more effective in reducing the gap between transport capabilities and the volume of traffic to be moved.

The intensified attacks would have little impact in halting either essential imports or the flow of petroleum

*Short tons are used throughout this Appendix.

necessary to sustain the logistic pipeline to South Vietnam. The amount of petroleum needed to sustain this system is small. North Vietnamese forces and civilian activities in MR IV, which includes the four southern provinces of the country, were consuming petroleum at the rate of 1,500 tons per month at the end of 1965. With the higher level of transport activity observed during the 1966 dry season, the average level of consumption in MR IV probably amounted to about 2,000 tons per month. The delivery of this petroleum as well as other supplies (including food) to MR IV probably requires an additional 500 tons of fuel per month.

The movement of supplies to and through Laos requires the consumption of only a small share of the petroleum moved into MR IV. At the end of 1965, it appeared that only about 400 tons of the 1,500 tons per month shipped to MR IV were used in the Laotian Panhandle. At present, this amount probably has increased to 500-600 tons. Trucks used to carry supplies destined for South Vietnam are estimated to consume about one-fourth of the fuel moved into the Panhandle.

The restrictions of rail traffic and the consequent additional requirements on truck and inland water transportation would seriously affect the availability of transportation for all nonessential economic needs. This lack of transport availability in conjunction with the disruption of imports through the ports would soon cause modern industry to grind to a halt unless substantial stockpiles of raw materials had been accumulated at the plants. Even if some of the plants had stockpiles sufficient to continue operating, internal distribution or export of their products would be seriously handicapped by insufficient transportation. Modern industry, however, represents only a small portion of North Vietnam's economic output.

If modern industry were forced to a standstill by escalated air attacks, demands for internal distribution for the industrial sector would be eliminated. The loss of demand for petroleum for the industrial sector would permit the allocation of most of the available petroleum to the transportation of military supplies, food, and other civilian essentials such as civil defense items and medicines. This transport capacity would be supplemented by the use of primitive transport.

The immediate and direct effect of the increased interdiction of the transport system on the availability of food would not be serious. Existing food storage facilities in the countryside are so decentralized that they require little transportation by modern means. The distribution of food to the cities, mainly Hanoi, Haiphong, and Nam Dinh, however, would be more difficult.

The long-range effect on the production and distribution of food, however, could cause some serious problems. The intensified air attacks on the level assumed in this report probably would aggravate manpower shortages and further disrupt that part of the irrigation system dependent on petroleum and electric power and could cause the decrease in food production. Decreased food production in conjunction with a decrease in transport capability could aggravate the problem of supplying a sufficient amount of food to the larger cities. The transport problem probably still would not be critical, however, because only 4 percent of the population lives in the three largest cities and only 7 percent lives in all cities of more than 10,000 persons.

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ANNEX II

THE EFFECTS OF SOVIET AND CHINESE INVOLVEMENT
IN THE WAR ON THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS



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ANNEX II

THE EFFECTS OF SOVIET AND CHINESE INVOLVEMENT
IN THE WAR ON THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS

I. Introduction

There is substantial evidence that the political positions of the Soviet Union and Communist China on the war, and the amount of their material assistance to the war effort, are highly significant influences on Vietnamese Communist policy. The importance of Soviet and Chinese support and assistance has been readily admitted by the Vietnamese. In his April 1965 speech setting forth the situation and tasks facing the Vietnamese after the US began bombing the North, Premier Pham Van Dong said simply that the "more" the Vietnamese are "supported and assisted in all fields by the socialist camp, the more they will be able to struggle vigorously and resolutely" against the enemy in Vietnam. In April of 1966, Dong re-emphasized the significance of bloc backing in a declaration that the "victories" of the Vietnamese people are not only the results of their own efforts, but are also the "result of the infinitely valuable sympathy, support and assistance by the fraternal socialist countries."

The Vietnamese view bloc support as valuable in sustaining and, in some ways, increasing the military pressure the Communists can bring to bear in South Vietnam. They also see it as a protective umbrella which partially inhibits direct allied military pressure on the DRV and helps to negate the effects of the bombing of the North. Firm Soviet and Chinese backing also helps complete the ideological equation in the conflict so important to the Communists, i. e., this is a "war of liberation" and it is the duty of all Communists to support and encourage such wars.

II. The Significance of Economic and Military Aid

A. General Level of Aid

In an apparent response to the allied air offensive, military and economic assistance provided by the

USSR and Communist China increased sharply in 1965. Although the total amounts of aid extended during 1965 are not known, reasonably firm evidence enables us to estimate that military aid amounting to about \$250 million and economic aid of about \$100 million was probably delivered in 1965. The Communist allies have undoubtedly undertaken commitments to provide additional assistance but we are unable to make any meaningful estimates of the total value of these commitments. There is reliable evidence that the USSR in 1965 did commit itself to extend additional assistance of at least \$160 million. We do not know if this extension is for military or economic programs. The weight of available evidence suggests that it is not for weapons but is probably intended as assistance in the rebuilding of bomb damaged facilities or for defense related activities.

The immediate significance of the military and economic aid provided by other Communist countries is that it provides North Vietnam the material means to carry out its aggressive programs. North Vietnam is significant militarily as a logistic base for the transmission of military supplies to South Vietnam, as a source of manpower, and as the center for control of the insurgency. As a primitive economy it has a capability to produce only minor items of military equipment and relies on other Communist countries for all of its heavy military equipment and most of its small arms and ammunition. Material assistance to North Vietnam is also significant as an apparent commitment of other Communist countries to underwrite the material costs of the war and to assist in the reconstruction of North Vietnam's economy. These assurances undoubtedly underlie North Vietnam's apparent willingness to lose its economic facilities to air attack and to persist in its pursuit of the war in South Vietnam. This attitude is undoubtedly strengthened by the knowledge that even more assistance will be forthcoming in 1966. Preliminary data on shipping to North Vietnam show that imports continue to rise above 1965 levels. At the same time exports are continuing to decline so that the growing import surplus can only be financed by additional assistance from Communist countries.

B. Economic Aid

Known economic credits and grants extended by Communist countries through 1962 amounted to more than \$956

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million. (See Table II-1). About 40 percent of the total was in the form of grants. By the end of 1964 from \$550-800 million or 60-80 percent of the extension had been drawn. The USSR accounted for \$370 million (40 percent) of total extensions and Communist China provided \$457 million (48 percent). The remaining \$130 million was supplied by the European Communist countries and token amounts were provided by Albania, North Korea, and Mongolia.

After an apparent hiatus of two years the Soviet program for economic assistance to North Vietnam was revived in February 1965 when Premier Kosygin visited Hanoi. As the war expanded substantial new extensions of economic aid were made in mid-1965. The only public statements about the value and composition of the aid has come from Hungary which is reported to have granted a modest \$5.5 million for trucks, telecommunications equipment, medical supplies, and machine tools.

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In December 1965 and January 1966 new aid agreements were signed with all Communist countries, suggesting that the mid-1965 agreements were small. Since then other Communist countries have promised increased assistance for North Vietnam. In May 1966, Moscow reported an agreement to provide technical assistance; additional Chinese aid for agriculture was announced in July. All the Warsaw Pact members also pledged increased economic aid to North Vietnam in July 1966.

We estimate that deliveries of economic aid in 1965 were in the order of \$100 million or from 20-40 percent above the average annual level in 1955-1964.

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All of these developments foreshadow a substantially increased aid in 1966 and 1967, a trend already confirmed by our intelligence on the volume and composition of North Vietnamese imports.

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Table II - 1

Communist Economic Aid Extended to North Vietnam a/
1955-64

	Million US \$									
	<u>1955</u>	<u>1956</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1958</u>	<u>1959</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1961</u>	<u>1962</u>	<u>1963-64</u>	<u>1955-64</u>
Communist China	200	<u>b/</u>	<u>b/</u>	<u>b/</u>	100	<u>b/</u>	157	<u>b/</u>	<u>b/</u>	457
USSR	100	8	12	21	25	200	4	N.A.	<u>b/</u>	369
Eastern Europe	50	8	7	<u>b/</u>	2	Negl.	62	<u>b/</u>	<u>b/</u>	130
Total	350	16	19	21	128	200	223	N.A.	<u>b/</u>	956

a. This is the minimum of economic aid extended by the Soviet Bloc and Communist China. In addition, insignificant amounts of aid have been extended by Albania, Mongolia, and North Korea. Because of rounding, components may not add to the totals shown.

b. No extensions are known to exist, although some may have taken place.

C. Military Aid

Military aid to North Vietnam which had previously been on a relatively small scale reached at least \$250 million in 1965.* About three-fourths of this aid, by value, was provided by the USSR as the supplier of North Vietnam's modern air defenses, particularly its SAM system and jet interceptors. The approximately \$50 million provided by Communist China was limited principally to conventional arms.

1. Soviet Military Aid

By the end of 1965 Soviet military aid to North Vietnam approached \$450 million. The sequence and value of Soviet arms aid to North Vietnam was as follows (in million US \$):**

1953-63	222
1964	53
1965	<u>167</u>
Total	442

Military aid extended after August 1964 and in early 1965 probably was completely delivered by the end of 1965. Major deliveries included equipment for about 20 surface-to-air missile firing battalions, 8 IL-28 light jet bombers, 11 MIG-21 jet fighters, 25 MIG-15/16 jet fighters, over 1,000 AA guns ranging from 37-100 mm., and hundreds of vehicles. (See Table II-2).

The USSR has also provided military technicians to instruct the North Vietnamese in the operation of the SAM system. In addition the North Vietnamese have received pilot training in Soviet jet fighters both in North Vietnam and the USSR. We estimate that the number of military technicians may have been as high as 1,500 in mid-1965, but diminished when the North Vietnamese began to

*The value of military aid is expressed in Soviet foreign trade prices.

**Values, reported in rubles, have been converted to dollars at the official exchange rate: 1 ruble = US \$1.11.

Table II-2

Estimated Soviet and Chinese Deliveries of Military Equipment to North Vietnam
1953 - June 1966

Equipment	Million US \$					
	USSR		Communist China		Total	
	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
SAM Firing Battalion	<u>24</u>	<u>127.0</u>	-	-	<u>24</u>	<u>127.0</u>
Aircraft	<u>163</u>	<u>55.4</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>5.7</u>	<u>207</u>	<u>61.1</u>
IL-28 light jet bomber	8	2.8	-	-	-	-
MIG-21 jet fighter	25	20.0	-	-	-	-
MIG-15/17 jet fighter	35	4.5	44	5.7	-	-
MI-6 helicopter	6	12.0	-	-	-	-
Other	89	16.1	-	-	-	-
Naval Craft	<u>20</u>	<u>8.2</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>21.6</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>29.8</u>
SO-1 subchaser	4	4.0	-	-	-	-
P-4 motor torpedo boat	12	3.0	-	-	-	-
Small minesweeper	4	1.2	-	-	-	-
Swatow-class PGM	-	-	30	18.0	-	-
Shanghai-class PTF	-	-	4	3.6	-	-
Artillery (mostly AA guns)	<u>2,800</u>	<u>68.0</u>	<u>200</u>	<u>4.3</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>72.3</u>
Armor (tanks, A.P.C.'s, S.P. guns)	<u>150</u>	<u>5.4</u>	-	-	<u>150</u>	<u>5.4</u>
Radar	<u>49</u>	<u>5.0</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>174</u>	<u>12.5</u>
Trucks and Vehicles	<u>1,500</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>1,500</u>	<u>7.5</u>	<u>3,000</u>	<u>15.0</u>
Small Arms and Infantry Weapons	Large Quantities	<u>50.0</u>	Large Quantities	<u>50.0</u>	Large Quantities	<u>100.0</u>
Ammunition	Large Quantities	<u>50.0</u>	Large Quantities	<u>30.0</u>	Large Quantities	<u>80.0</u>
Total		<u>376.5</u>		<u>126.6</u>		<u>503.1</u>

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assume operational control of the SAM system. The cost of this technical assistance was probably less than \$10 million.

Following North Vietnam's active confrontation with the US in the Tonkin Gulf incidents of August 1964, the Soviets extended Hanoi the reported \$53 million grant listed above for antiaircraft and including \$17 million for surface-to-air missile systems and missile and flight training for North Vietnamese crews. Shortly after Kosygin's visit to Hanoi in February 1965, another \$167 million was reportedly granted for aircraft and additional antiaircraft and SAM equipment.

An indication of continued military aid in 1966 is contained in reports on the "Gratuitous Aid and Technical Assistance Agreement" signed in Moscow in December 1965. Reportedly, the USSR agreed to provide large quantities of 130-mm antiaircraft guns, other ground equipment, and possibly 60 additional MIG-21 jet fighters. Although not enough is known on types and quantities of equipment to permit an estimate of the value of the arms portion of the agreement, the cost of the antiaircraft guns and jet fighters alone will exceed \$80 million.

2. Chinese Military Aid

[redacted] but we estimate that total aid by the end of 1965 was on the order of \$125 million of which about \$50 million was delivered in 1965. Although the North Vietnamese armed forces are structured basically on Chinese rather than Soviet lines, until 1960-61 they were equipped largely with weapons from the USSR. From 1960 to the Gulf of Tonkin incidents in August 1964 Chinese arms aid to Hanoi probably increased to a point where it equalled--if it did not exceed--Soviet arms aid. Following the Gulf of Tonkin incidents, the Chinese continued to provide some weapons, including 44 MIG-15/17 jet fighters and 4 Shanghai-class fast patrol boats, but fell far behind the USSR as the major arms supplier. The major Chinese contribution to Hanoi's war effort has been as a provider of military construction units and materials and, possibly, operational antiaircraft elements.

Some elements of Chinese military units are positioned in Northeast and Northwest near the main railroad

lines leading to Yunnan and Kwangsi. Elements of two railway engineer divisions of the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) and an antiaircraft division are known to be in these areas. Although little is known regarding the size of this force, it is estimated that from 25,000 to 45,000 Chinese may be involved.

Aside from these operational units, Chinese military technicians in North Vietnam may exceed 1,000. Unconfirmed reports state that 200 North Vietnamese pilots and ground crews trained in China in 1961-64. Although little is known on the numbers of Chinese technicians advising North Vietnam in the period 1961-64, they are believed not to have been so large as to move the cost of this military technical assistance above the \$10 million spent by the USSR.

3. Other Communist Military Aid

Military aid supplied to North Vietnam by the Communist countries of Eastern Europe before 1965 was negligible. The major items of military and emergency reconstruction aid extended or delivered by these countries since then may be summarized as follows:

<u>Donor Country</u>	<u>Nature of Aid</u>
Czechoslovakia	Small Arms, Ammunition
East Germany	10 Field Hospitals
Hungary	Medicines, Hospital
Poland	Barges, Trucks, Hospital
Rumania	Vehicles, Trucks

East European aid primarily is of a quasimilitary, defense support nature (even the Czechoslovakian small arms were mainly sporting rifles for training purposes). This aid has gained impetus in 1966 and may be expected to increase substantially in the future.

D. Bloc Aid as a Critical Factor in Continuing the War

Although Soviet and Chinese military and economic aid has been small in terms of their capabilities, it is absolutely vital to North Vietnam's ability to adequately

defend its territory and to support the insurgency in South Vietnam. A cessation of bloc military aid would, in fact, almost certainly make it impossible for the Vietnamese to sustain the war in South Vietnam at its present level of intensity.

North Vietnam has no productive capability to produce heavy military equipment or the new family of weapons with which the VC Main Forces are being equipped. The NVA and VC Main Forces are totally dependent on outside sources for the 7.62 family of weapons and the heavier weapons being introduced into South Vietnam. If these sources were denied, the VC/NVA forces would be deprived of their major offensive capabilities, and once stock-piles were exhausted these forces would be compelled to revert to a much lower level of military activity.

Since the available evidence points not only to a continuation, but to a probable increase in bloc aid during the last half of 1966, it does not appear likely that the Vietnamese Communists will be faced with devising any substitutes for it or of altering their policy to take account of its cessation during the foreseeable future. Moreover, so long as Soviet and Chinese support continues at least at its present levels, it does not appear that the Vietnamese Communists would view it as a critical factor in any basic determination they might make on whether to continue the fighting. Vietnamese Communist assertions that, in the final analysis, they must rely mainly on their own resources to prosecute the revolution appear to reflect a genuine and deeply held belief. The theme of "self-reliance" has been a persistent one in Vietnamese Communist statements, and has not at all been abandoned or dampened down in the face of the increasing allied military pressure on the Viet Cong and on the DRV.

In March of 1966, for example, DRV party spokesman Truong Chinh declared that the "strategic line" of the revolution was still to rely "mainly on our own forces" while fighting a protracted war. In April, Ho Chi Minh told [] that the Vietnamese people, while "highly appreciating" the assistance of the socialist countries would "basically depend on their own forces." In May, another North Vietnamese politburo spokesman, Pham Hung, reiterated that, even while employing assistance from the bloc, "our dictum is to rely principally on our own strength."

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III. The Rationale For Chinese Support

There appear to be several important considerations in the Vietnamese view which tend to reinforce their "do it yourself" attitude. They apparently believe, for one thing, that there are distinct limits to the amount of political and materiel support which can be counted upon from Peking and Moscow. Vietnamese documents and statements indicate that they believe Peking is willing to make a considerable contribution of military, economic, and political assistance to keep the fighting going along its present lines--a protracted struggle by proxy, fought if necessary to the last Vietnamese. Hanoi is also well aware that the conflict provides a test case of Mao's theory that "wars of liberation" can be fought without provoking a US nuclear response against either the local Communists or their sponsors. This war, moreover, is taking place in an area close to China and in a region which the Chinese believe to be their rightful sphere of influence.

However, the Vietnamese also appear to believe that there are limits to the price Peking is willing to pay to keep the conflict going. This is implicit, in part, in the DRV's handling and comment on public Chinese pledges of assistance. For example, a 28 December 1965 editorial in the DRV party daily, which dealt with Chinese assistance, was formulated in a manner which made it clear that the latest pledges of Chinese support were not as strong as those earlier issued by Peking, prior to the escalation of the air war against North Vietnam. The editorial also treated the question of Chinese volunteers for Vietnam in a fashion which suggested some doubt in Hanoi over the ultimate willingness of Peking to bring in combat troops should the situation deteriorate to the point where they might be needed. The editorial followed a new aid pact between the Chinese and the North Vietnamese signed in early December. The pact was treated in the press of both countries with caution and without the usual fanfare. The aid, moreover, was in the form of a loan and not a grant. This, in itself, suggested limitations on the Chinese interest in supporting the Vietnamese.

Peking's caution is not, however, entirely a negative factor in Hanoi's view. The Vietnamese themselves wish to prevent the introduction of such massive Chinese assistance as would undercut Vietnamese Communist control

and direction of the insurgency, unless it was required to prevent the extinction of the Communist regime in the DRV. This was underscored by DRV politburo member, Le Duc Tho, in an article published in the North Vietnamese party journal in February 1966. The "lines, strategy, and methods" of the revolution, wrote Tho, are a "responsibility which our party must assume, as we ourselves and alone can realize most clearly the problems concerning the revolution in our country."

Tho was doubtless addressing both Peking and Moscow in his remarks, but he probably had mainly in mind the persistent Chinese political pressure on Hanoi designed to keep the Vietnamese steadfast in the war and block any possible move toward negotiations. One prime example of this occurred in June when the Chinese lashed out at a Soviet-sponsored World Peace Council proposal on negotiations to end the war. Although the proposal closely echoed the DRV's own four points, the Chinese maintained that because it did not insist on the "immediate and total withdrawal of US troops from South Vietnam," it had left out the key element in a Vietnam settlement. Hanoi itself has never insisted on immediate withdrawal as a condition for negotiations and did not make any comment on the proposal by the council. Peking, however, was clearly anxious to make it appear that the Asian Communist position on ending the war was tougher than indicated in the Council proposal to which the North Vietnamese had been a party. Peking's quick attack denied Hanoi the opportunity to voice any approval of the proposal lest it indicate an open difference of opinion with the Chinese.

Even given the Chinese willingness to pressure Hanoi, however, it is probable that the pressure would not be sufficient to force the Vietnamese to stay in the war if they decide on their own volition to end the fighting. The Vietnamese Communists probably estimate that, in view of the limitations on the Chinese commitment, Peking would do little more than complain if the conflict were terminated short of an insurgent victory. The Chinese, in fact, seem to recognize this, for they have repeatedly left themselves an out by emphasizing that all decisions on the war are "strictly" up to the Vietnamese.

IV. Vietnamese View of Soviet Support

The Vietnamese Communists probably judge, on the basis of Moscow's assistance so far, that the Soviet commitment

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in the war is considerably more restrained than that of the Chinese. This can be seen, in part, in North Vietnamese statements dealing with Soviet assistance. Although Hanoi has, in the main, carefully attempted to express equal gratitude for the help of both bloc powers, some remarks implicitly critical of Moscow have occasionally come forth. In mid-1965, for example, at a time when the North Vietnamese signed aid pacts with both Peking and Moscow, DRV spokesmen were much warmer in their description of Chinese assistance than of Soviet. Peking's support was termed at the time the "firmest, the most powerful, and the most effective," while China was hailed as the "most enthusiastic and resolute comrade in arms of all nations fighting against the imperialists."

Hanoi is fully aware that Moscow, like Peking, has also displayed an overriding concern in its actions on the war to avoid steps which might lead to a direct Soviet-US military confrontation. For example, Moscow has throughout the conflict avoided sea delivery to Haiphong of sensitive military shipments. Moreover, important Soviet officials have gone out of their way in private to disavow the significance for Soviet-US relations of the presence of Soviet military-technical personnel in the DRV.

It is doubtless clear to the Vietnamese that the Soviets would like an early end to the war. Evidence suggests that the Soviets did cautiously advise Hanoi to move toward a political settlement of the conflict in early 1965. Following Kosygin's visit to the DRV in February, the Chinese charged that Moscow had sent a formal proposal to Hanoi and Peking suggesting a reconvention of an international conference on Indochina. During the bombing pause early this year, party secretary Shelepin apparently took further soundings on Hanoi's attitude toward possible political alternatives to the conflict. In recent months, in view of the continuing hard-line stand of the Vietnamese, the Russians appear to have avoided applying most of the pressures they could exert on the DRV, probably judging them to be marginal at best.

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Despite the limitations on Soviet assistance and support, it is probable that Soviet backing has, on balance, the effect of buttressing the Vietnamese Communist will to

persist in the conflict. The Vietnamese probably judge that they can continue to count indefinitely on Moscow's assistance along present lines so long as the war continues in its present context. They probably believe, in fact, that the Soviets are now locked into the struggle in view of the pretensions Moscow still holds to leadership of the Communist camp, and that it cannot afford to step completely aside.